

BLACK LIVES MATTER

in the past and present

BY SUE KOZEL

Sue Kozel recently retired from teaching at several New Jersey higher education institutions where she taught a variety of courses including New Jersey history, American History, African American history, World History, and Western Civilization. In August 2021 she will be a fellow with the International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello studying Quakers who worked for Thomas Jefferson's slave plantations. Designated a public scholar by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, she led discussions about the murder in 1784 of a New Jersey enslaved woman named Betty. Her talk on Betty can be read at bit.ly/kozelbetty.

Kozel is a proud NJREA member and has dedicated her research to answering uncomfortable questions about power, slavery, and freedom.

NJ AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY RESOURCES FOR THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Sue Kozel, NJREA, retired faculty,
New Jersey universities and community colleges

Author's note: When I first proposed writing this piece in the NJEA Review in early spring, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others had not yet been murdered. Community leaders, citizens, clergy, and the Black Lives Matter movement pushed for racial justice and built broad coalitions of support. In late August, Jacob Blake was shot seven times in the back by police. Any article on New Jersey African American history resources during the American revolutionary period must note that Black Lives Mattered, whether acknowledged or not in historical records. This article lists many resources that can help 6-12 grade teachers and community college faculty engage students in discussions of freedom, enslavement, citizenship or the lack thereof, and the rights of Americans in pursuit of liberty during the American Revolutionary Era. Stay safe from COVID-19, and best wishes, Sue Kozel

PREPARING FOR AN INCLUSIVE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL

The year 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of New Jersey's and our nation's break from England to seek its independence. Sara Cureton, executive director of the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), noted that there are many opportunities to continue collecting, sharing, building upon and developing new, inclusive resources, including the African American contributions, about New Jersey's place in the revolutionary war story.

Many state organizations, including the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), are leading efforts to showcase historical documents and stories that communicate New Jersey's diverse history, including that of free African Americans, enslaved people, runaway slaves, the loyalists' commitment to the king, and patriotic causes.

Nationally, the Philadelphia-based Museum of the American Revolution added important elements of New Jersey history to this year's 100th anniversary of suffrage. Museum Director of Curatorial Affairs and Chief Historian Dr. Philip C. Mead shared documentation showing that three New Jersey African American men were found to have voted in the state before 1808—the year when Blacks were specifically excluded, along with women, from voting in the Garden State. The Black male voters from that era that have been found so far are Ephraim Hagerman, Tom Blue, and Caesar Trent, all of whom are documented to have voted in Montgomery Township in 1801.

New Jersey is fortunate to have so many people dedicated to a protect, preserve, and present its rich and diverse history from the New Jersey Amistad Commission to the New Jersey State Archives, for example.

There are, in fact, far too many resources to fit into the print edition of the *NJEA Review*. For a longer version of this article containing many more resources, see its online version at njea.org/aaresourcesnj. All of this material can serve as preliminary and important resources to assist with the preparation for the semiquincentennial.

NJEA CONVENTION WORKSHOP

Even this list of resources is only starting point. On Friday, Nov. 6, at 9 a.m., please join my online workshop at the virtual NJEA Convention titled, Engage, Inspire, Research, Teach: Early New Jersey Black History/ American Revolution Resources. I will discuss more about the resources.



Permission Granted by New Jersey State Archives, state.nj.us/state/archives/eventsat.html

NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES

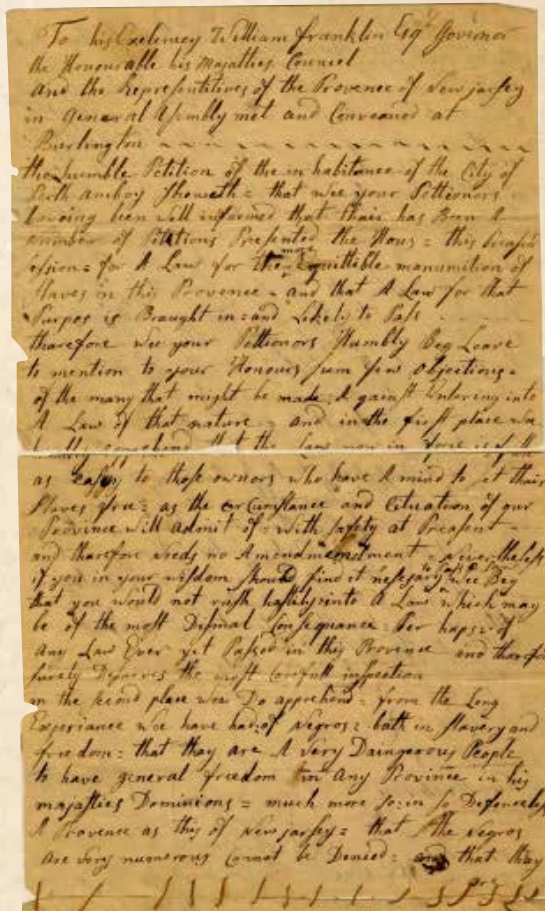
Petitions opposing and supporting emancipation

Sometimes petitions or documents submitted from citizens to advocate for one position or another, in this case either keeping enslavement or granting freedom, give us insight into how New Jerseyans thought about slavery. To help us begin, we will turn to the New Jersey State Archives.

The New Jersey State Archives has extraordinary resources available to help teach African American history. These petitions show us how contested the idea of freedom was for enslaved African Americans, and how many residents of cities and towns submitted petitions against and for the freedom of enslaved people on the eve of the American Revolution. A special thank you for allowing these resources to be digitized for this issue of *NJEA Review*.



Caesar Trent, an African American voter listed as a voter (in the upper right column) in 1801, in Montgomery Township. From the New Jersey State Archives. Permission granted by the Museum of the American Revolution. Note: In the image, an individual is pointing to a woman who also voted in 1801.



Petition of Citizens of Perth Amboy to the General Assembly, opposing slave manumissions, Jan. 12, 1774: This petition, directed to Royal Governor William Franklin captures how many white citizens feared free African Americans and slaves in Perth Amboy. A direct quote with exact language, "from the long experience wee have had of Negroes: both in slavery and freedom: that they are A Very Dangerous People."

Source: From Collection: Department of Education, Bureau of Archives and History Manuscript Collection, SED5L006, Box 24

November 9th 1775

To the Honourable House of Representatives and General Assembly for the Province of N. Carolina, Gentlemen. We your humble Petitioners Inhabitants of Chesterfield Township County of Burlington and Province aforesaid. Being justly alarmed with the present deplorable Situation of our Country and truly thoughtful for ourselves and fellow Creatures, and desiring to avoid the Judgment of God from our Sins, being in our Power, and to do Justice to ourselves and others, we are taught to Judge not as we should be judged, For it is said, with what Judgment ye Judge ye shall be Judge. And the Measure ye mete to others shall be Measure to you again. And that all things that ye would that Men should do unto you, even so ye should do unto them. We therefore your humble Petitioners Seeing Plainly the bad Effects and bad Attendance of keeping Negroes in Slavery and how inconsistent it is with Equity. We therefore humbly pray that your Petitioners unborn or that may hereafter be born amongst us to be free. Males at Twenty one and Females at Eighteen Years of Age. May your Goodness be the beginning of this Reformation. And may God prosper you. And your Petitioners will ever pray be

Dwight Wright Gentl ^{ly} of State	Joseph Sewers	Samuel Beek
Joseph Joseph James Joseph Bunting	Francis James Francis James John Taylor	James Holloway William Martin Fred Ferson
Nathan Middleton David Hill Jesse Croft Samuel Bunting Benjamin Holloway John Halls Hester H. H. H.	Sam ^l Sampson Edward Beek The Thompson John Wright Marmaduke Watson John Thompson	John Bunting Samuel Taylor Abraham Chapman Saron Taylor Samuel Holloway Samuel Tatterthwaite
Corvus Pharo Andrew Ware William Salsworth John DeCon Joseph Brown William Lane Joseph Willets Jacob Fields Joseph Fields W ^m Stevenson	Henry Bentore Wm. H. H. John Middleton William Chapman Evan Page Moses Williams Judah Williams Judah Williams Robert Kirby Jonathan Pease John Spray	

Petition of Inhabitants of Chesterfield Township, Burlington County to the General Assembly, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery, Nov. 9, 1775: This petition was issued less than a week before Lord Dunmore's Proclamation was adopted urging enslaved people to run from their pro-American Revolutionary patriots to earn freedom by joining the British military. Written by residents of largely Quaker Chesterfield, in Burlington County, the signers called for freedom to the "unborn" and those born into slavery, with males free at age of 21 and women at age 18.

Source: From Collection: Department of Education, Bureau of Archives and History Manuscript Collection, SEDSL006, Box 24

Manumission records and birth certificates of children of enslaved persons

The state archives also include manumission records for several counties on microfilm, but this link, nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1003.html, provides for Hunterdon County Slave Manumissions with scanned images. In this historical record New Jersey residents can search for family members. There is an index of names and the actual records scanned.

Additionally, there are Hunterdon County Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804-1835, at nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1004.html. These include scanned images, so you can see the name of the slave holder and the name of the enslaved woman who gave birth. These records are significant because of New Jersey's gradual emancipation law that freed children born into slavery from 1804 on after a certain age. Many counties are listed with finding aids, but most information is on microfilm at this time. You can search the archives at bit.ly/archivescatalognj. Search "slavery" under the subject search.

NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Taking the lead on presenting an inclusive and diverse history of the American Revolution as part of the 250th Anniversary of our nation's founding, many older New Jersey Historical Commission resources are available for free in the New Jersey State Library (see listing to follow).

One important starting point is the agency's list of resources to mark the British history of slavery in the North America in 1619, and teachers might start with this source for background at bit.ly/slavehistorynjhc.

NEW JERSEY AMISTAD COMMISSION

Tasked with providing support and training for New Jersey school districts on the "infusion of African American content, and instructional materials and resources" for K-12 curriculum since 2002, the New Jersey Amistad Commission serves a critical partner in New Jersey's teaching of African American history. In August, this commission sponsored another Summer Institute to help faculty access impressive resources for learning.

After visiting its main website, nj.gov/education/amistad faculty can register at njamistadcurriculum.net to access web-based curriculum resources including lesson plans and supplemental primary documents and other resources.

Unit 4, "The Emerging Atlantic World: Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans" and Unit 5 "Establishment of a New Nation and Independence to Republic" have extensive online resources built around New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies. No wheel has to be recreated here because of the depth of thoughtful content. Within Unit 5, for example there is a chronology of events from 1607 to 1792 that highlights key moments from the introduction of slavery to the British Colonies in North America to rebellions against slavery.

NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY RESOURCES

New Jersey State Librarian Deb Mercer provided some great suggestions for resources that can be used effectively in the classroom and are available online on the New Jersey State Library website.

The New Jersey African American Curriculum Guide

The 1997 publication of this guide by Larry Greene and Lenworth Gunther was published through the New Jersey Historical Commission. You can find links to each section of the guide at bit.ly/njlibraryaacurric.

In Unit 4, there is a link titled "Petition of Prime for Manumission (1786)." It pertains to an enslaved person named Prime Sheweth, who was freed after the revolution ended.

New Jersey's Revolutionary Experience

This is a collection of 28 pamphlets, lesson plans, and teacher resources on New Jersey during the revolution found at bit.ly/njlibraryrevex.

Item Number 14 in the link focuses on African Americans during the revolution. Visit this link, and download all the PDFs to enhance your course work. They are older resources, but they are helpful while new writing is undertaken.

Historian Giles R. Wright

The late historian Giles R. Wright prepared thoughtful historical reports on the underground railroad as well as a mini-version of history in his book, *Afro-Americans in New Jersey: A Short History* (Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1989). While this link, bit.ly/njlibraryaahistory, will provide you all the chapters, pay particular attention to the section labeled "Colonial Period to 1790."

Wright served as a leading authority on Underground Railroad sites and history in New Jersey. *Steal Away, Steal Away: A Guide to The Underground Railroad in New Jersey* is very useful as students learn about the transition in the African American experience post-American Revolution. It can be found at bit.ly/stealawaynj.

While outside of the revolutionary time period, *Civil Rights in New Jersey, 1945-2020: Discrimination in Social Life*, will provide useful to teachers and students looking at change over time, especially in light of the advocacy of the Black Lives Matter movement leadership on criminal justice reform. You'll find it at libguides.njstatelib.org/discrimination/public.

THE NEW JERSEY DIGITAL LEGAL LIBRARY

This bibliography of New Jersey case law, from the colonial to the Early American Republic, provides examples of laws passed to punish slaves, enable enslavement, provide from individual manumissions of slaves, pass slave code laws, and move toward gradual abolition. You'll find *The Law of Slavery in New Jersey: An Annotated Bibliography* at njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/bibliog.html. Paul Axel-Lute provided an exceptional service to scholars, lawyers, and community members with this listing.

For example, faculty can show individual court petitions and case decisions to students about why an enslaved man, woman, or child was freed, for example, with the record including the slave's name, the date, the city/town, the county, the slave owner's name, and the details of the decision.

Students can touch history with these cases. The 1790 case, *State Against James Anderson*, involved an enslaved young man named Silas whose mother was freed, but he continued in enslavement, an act that violated his natural right to liberty. From my own research and publication, I know that the Pennsylvania Abolition Society joined with Quaker Richard Wain to push for freedom for Silas. You can read the case at njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/cases/C21.html. 📖

Resources

The originally submitted version of this article contained far too many resources to fit into the print edition of the *NJEA Review*. For a longer version of this article containing many more resources, see its online version at njea.org/aaresourcesnj.

In addition to what appears on these pages, you'll find these additional resources in the online version:

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- Sankofa Collaborative
- Haverford College Quaker and Special Collections
- Slave Voyages: Transatlantic Slave Trade Database
- The Princeton and Slavery Project
- Rutgers University Scarlet and Black Project
- Kean University: The World of William Livingston
- Using Monmouth County as an Example for Resources
- Crossroads of the American Revolution, A National Heritage Area
- The Old Barracks Museum
- African America Stoutsburg Cemetery
- Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum
- Museum of the American Revolution
- HistoricCamdenCounty.com