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The New York African Burial Ground "Final" Analysis: Intersections of Time, Space, and Perspective. American Anthropological Association Conference.

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Conference Symposium:

The New York African Burial Ground "Final" Analysis: Intersections of Time, Space, and Perspective. American Anthropological Association Conference. San Jose, California, November 18, 2006.



Eighteenth century map

Symposium organizers, Autumn Barrett and Shannon Mahoney; chair, Michael Blakey; presenters, Alan Goodman, Jean Howson, Warren Perry, Lesley Rankin-Hill, Joseph Jones, Arion Mayes, Christopher Null, Susan Goode-Null, Autumn Barrett, Michael Blakey, Barbara Bianco, Sherrill Wilson, and David Thomas. Date and time: November 18, 2006, 8am to 11:45am.

Abstract: New York City's 18th century African Burial Ground was excavated during 1991-1992 to make way for a federal building. The cooperation of today's descendants availed the opportunity to conduct studies of the cemetery and archaeological site, containing the largest colonial bioarchaeological population studied in the Americas. More than 400 human skeletal remains and their archaeological and historical contexts were analyzed by Howard University research teams from 1993 through 2003 when the remains were reburied in Manhattan following ceremonies in 5 east coast cities. The final multidisciplinary reports were completed between 2004 and 2006. Critical, publicly-engaged, biocultural, and Diasporic approaches have framed the construction of the history of these early enslaved Africans undertaken by more than 200 researchers at 9 laboratories and universities. The final analysis, being reported here for the first time, attempts a synthesis of science and humanism in order to comprehend an African colonial experience in which a nascent African-American identity would emerge. This study has also considered the broad transatlantic and Caribbean context of New York commerce and

examines events in English colonial and U.S. history that impacted the Africans buried at the site. Their origins and arrivals, and conditions of their lives and deaths are exhibited in studies of art, genetics, histology, material culture, demography, pathology, spatial analysis, chemistry, historiography, ethnology, nutrition, work, development, trauma, human rights and public dialogue. Symposium participants are challenged to integrate these methods to tell a story about times in history and in the human life cycle.

Additional conference information is available on the AAA web site at www.aaanet.org.