



Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: The Story of New York's African Burial Ground (Coretta Scott King Author Honor Books)

Joyce Hansen

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How can we learn about the lives of African slaves in Colonial America? Often forbidden to read or write, they left few written records. But in 1991 scientists rediscovered New York's long-ignored African Burial Ground, which opened an exciting new window into the past.

A woman with filed teeth buried with a girdle of beads; a black soldier buried with his British Navy uniform, his face pointing east; a mother and child, laid to rest side by side: to scientists, each of these burials has much to tell us about African slaves in America.

Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence shows how archaeologists and anthropologists have learned to read life stories in shattered bones, tiny beads, and the faint traces left by coffin lids in ancient soil. At the same time, by blending together the insights found buried in the soil and the results of historians' careful studies, it gives us a moving, inspiring portrait of the lives Africans created in Colonial New York.

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