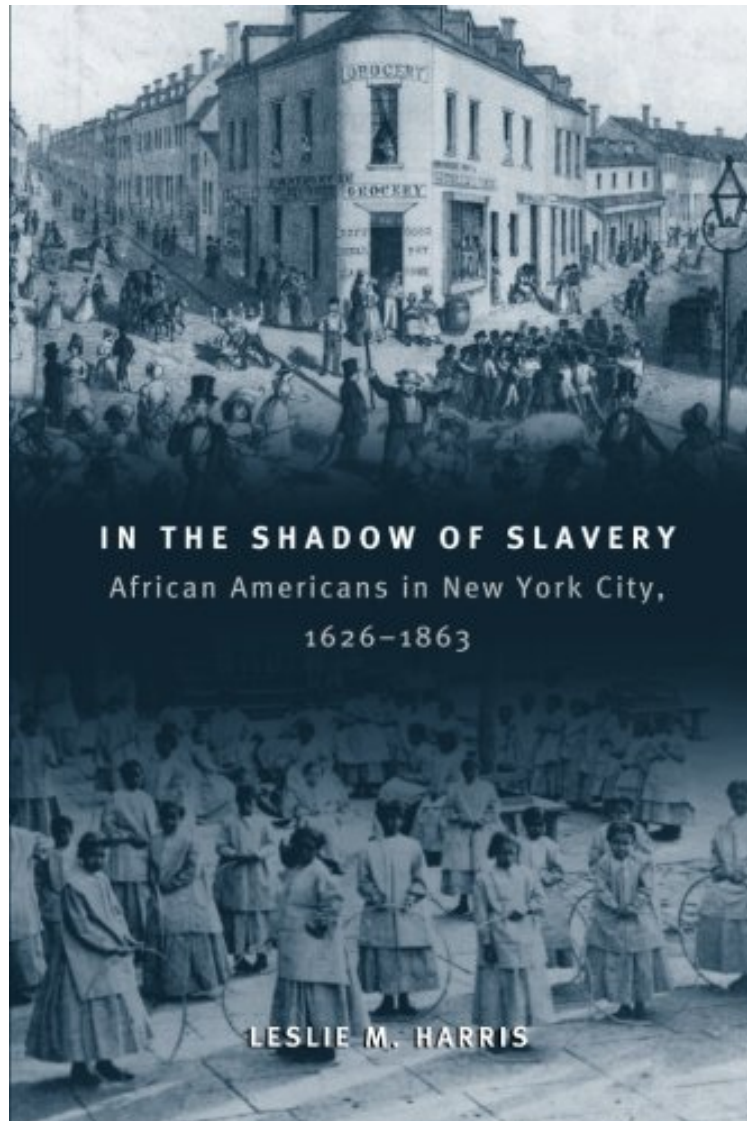


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## **In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863 (Historical Studies of Urban America)**

*Leslie M. Harris*

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**Leslie M. Harris : In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863 (Historical Studies of Urban America)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863 (Historical Studies of Urban America):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy Ann HolderUsing for my Pratt students in course on Invisible Histories of New York. Written in the wake of discovery and community protest around the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan, Harris makes visible a new world of questions and complexity regarding enslavement, emancipation and citizenship in the US urban 'north.'

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Definitive and readableBy FiloThis book was an eye-opening experience for me, covering an aspect of slavery that is usually overlooked in our culture. It seems to me not only a definitive book that is a reliable source, but it is also one that is highly readable, and it should appeal not only to scholars of the subject but to popular readers as well.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy gretchenI was greatly informed of a past not known to many.

"The black experience in the antebellum South has been thoroughly documented. But histories set in the North are few. In the *Shadow of Slavery*, then, is a big and ambitious book, one in which insights about race and class in New York City abound. Leslie Harris has masterfully brought more than two centuries of African American history back to life in this illuminating new work."

David Roediger, author of *The Wages of Whiteness*

In 1991 in lower Manhattan, a team of construction workers made an astonishing discovery. Just two blocks from City Hall, under twenty feet of asphalt, concrete, and rubble, lay the remains of an eighteenth-century "Negro Burial Ground." Closed in 1790 and covered over by roads and buildings throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the site turned out to be the largest such find in North America, containing the remains of as many as 20,000 African Americans. The graves revealed to New Yorkers and the nation an aspect of American history long hidden: the vast number of enslaved blacks who labored to create our nation's largest city. In *the Shadow of Slavery* lays bare this history of African Americans in New York City, starting with the arrival of the first slaves in 1626, moving through the turbulent years before emancipation in 1827, and culminating in one of the most terrifying displays of racism in U.S. history, the New York City Draft Riots of 1863. Drawing on extensive travel accounts, autobiographies, newspapers, literature, and organizational records, Leslie M. Harris extends beyond prior studies of racial discrimination by tracing the undeniable impact of African Americans on class, politics, and community formation and by offering vivid portraits of the lives and aspirations of countless black New Yorkers. Written with clarity and grace, *In the Shadow of Slavery* is an ambitious new work that will prove indispensable to historians of the African American experi

"[Among] the first books to bring a rich knowledge of New York history to a precise and detailed analysis. . . . Announces the arrival of a strong interpretation: New York City was full of slaves; slavery was central to the metropolitan economy of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; and slavery unraveled only by degrees, the pace excruciatingly slow. . . . The most thorough and intricate portrait that we have of an assertive and influential Northern black community. . . . Harris provides a sophisticated account of the tragic counterpoint between the assertive black politics forged by these people and a hardening color line that opposed them. She corrects the common mistake of casting anti-slavery as a white movement by putting black abolitionists at the very center where they are seldom seen but rightfully belong."