[Name of the Writer]

[Name of Instructor]

[Subject]

[Date]

African Burial Grounds National Monument

1. Discuss why an African Burial Ground exists in New York, rather than simply a burial ground (i.e., for all deceased persons.). Explain what this suggests about the state of race relations at this early point in New Amsterdam/ New York?

In the year 1991 when the construction of office building of General Services Administration was in phase, the discovery of graves took place 24 feet below ground. Those graves later led the discovery of other hundreds of bodies from the same area. When a proper investigation was done on these bodies, it was determined that those bodies belong to black New Yorkers of 1755 "Negros Burial Ground" people. This evidence of the Burial ground shook the entire world. Howard University scholars for seven years were led by Michael L. Blakey who is an anthropologist examined relics and every fragment of bones that were found at the site. His reports mentioned that injuries were found on several bones from which it was inferred that they were bones of harsh physical labor, malnutrition sign, and indications like filed teeth show that they belong to African heritage. There was a distinction between American born slaves and African born. The filed teeth in hourglass shape show cultural tradition which was prevalent West African tradition. Rings indication was found out on the skull base of several burials of a female because of the heavy load that they carry on their heads, which is another tradition of West African society. 40 % of the total burials were to be of an infant which shows their extremely high mortality rate.

1. Identify the two colonies which had the most African slaves at the start of the American Revolution.

When the American Revolution started, less than 10 percent of slaves from half a million in the thirteen colonies resided in North working in agricultural fields primarily. Charleston, South Carolina had the greatest number of slaves. With more than 20000 slaves New York had the second greatest number of slaves.

1. Mention when this African Burial Ground finally fell into disuse by the population and what happened to it after this period.

From 1690 to 1790 which constitutes a century, Lower Manhattan small plot of land became the burial place for more than 15000 enslaved and free Africans. After this period, this burial place was then taken into usage for landfill and urban development until its rediscovery by the workers in 1991 when excavation procedure was carried out by office building of federal government(Lanning, 2016). When it was revealed during the excavation of 1991 and remains of 419 Africans with the 500 individual artifacts were collected, recognizing the importance of this site, the Interior Secretary in 1993 designated the African Burial Ground as a historic national landmark. Later it was listed in the Historic Places National's Register. In the year 2006, it was designated as a national monument and National Park Service administered the monument afterward. Evolving further into Rodney Leon's memorial took place in 2007 for his dedication and in 2010 it was made new visitor center.

1. Discuss how many Africans were disinterred and then re-entered at this African Burial Ground, as you mention how and when their remains were discovered in the first place.

In 1991 bodies related to the African Burial Ground which approximate to 419 were disinterred during and after excavation was done to carry out archaeological researches. After that in the ceremony related to the Rites of Ancestral Return ceremony memorial, which initiated in Howard University with an event known as Evening Departure ceremony, celebration and documentation were carried out for the African American contribution(Katz, 2006). The remains of ancestral were then returned from Washington D.C. to African Burial Ground. On 4th October 2003, remains of African Burial Ground were given their proper resting place at the African Burial Ground.

# Works Cited

Katz, Sarah R. "Redesigning Civic Memory: The African Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan." *Theses (Historic Preservation)*(2006): 10.

Lanning, Michael Lee. "African Americans and the American Revolution." *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Race and the American Military*. Routledge, 2016. 45-54.