

## Ordinance Prohibiting the Inhabitants of the Colony from Trading... Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1642.

- New Netherland
- Trade
- Mercantilism
- Colonization

- Reading for Tone
- Close Reading
- Economics and Economic Systems

Middle & High School Level

- Mercantilism's restrictions on individual freedoms
- Evidence of a robust illicit trade network in Rensselaerswyck and New Netherland as a whole
- And the presence of non-Dutch residents in Rensselaerswyck, as New Netherland was a uniquely diverse colony

### Essential Question:

**Why was the fur trade so important to the DWIC and how was it governed?**

### Historical Context:

The Patroonship of Rensselaerswyck encompassed modern day Rensselaer and Albany counties. Patroons were granted special permissions to fund settlements, or patroonships, in New Netherland by the Dutch West India Company's charter of Freedoms and Exemptions. In addition to Company laws, patroonships had their own judicial systems. This ordinance comes from Rensselaerswyck's secretary, Arendt Van Curler, nephew of the colony's Patroon, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer. This Ordinance is in response to an increase in trade, now deemed illegal, between the patroon's colonists and non-Dutch traders from Europe, neighboring colonies, and neighboring Native American nations. This Ordinance follows another of its kind from October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1642, outlawing private sailors from entering the colony without a license, from trading with any resident, and from leaving the colony without an inspection of their vessel.

## Document Analysis:

1. [The teacher can recap the extension activity or exit tickets from the lesson on the ordinance from Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, 1642 to introduce this lesson.] If taught independently, introduce the lesson by setting the stage. Ask for volunteers to share the last time they made an exchange of any kind (purchased, traded, borrowed, or loaned) and what it was that they exchanged. This discussion will set up students to relate to New Netherland as a culture reliant on trade and market economics, much like ours.
2. Read aloud the ordinance from Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1642 to the class and instruct students to follow along silently.
3. Following the first reading, instruct students to answer guided questions 1 & 2 attached to the document after you read aloud the ordinance a second time.
4. Discuss these questions as a class. Then ask students to individually brainstorm as many answers as they can come up with for guiding question 3.
5. Think, pair, share: Following brainstorming, group students into pairs (or groups of three) and instruct them to answer guided question number 3 collaboratively.
6. Instruct the pairs to design a public advertisement of their new ordinance in whatever format they choose. These can be in the form of newspapers, “Wanted” posters, social media posts, or any representation of their ordinance that they can construct as a pair/small group.
7. Reconvene class and instruct each pair or group to present their advertisements to the class, discussing why their ordinances were written the way they were and how they compared and contrasted with the ordinance from Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1642.
8. To conclude class discussion, introduce the next lesson of the day by reading a selected section of Adriaen Van Der Donck’s “On the Reasons and Causes of Why New Netherland is so Decayed” that will be used for the subsequent lesson. In 1644, Van Der Donck details the failure of the Company and the Patroonships to police illicit trade two years after this ordinance is passed. Ask students if their predictions for the ordinance were proved correct.

## *Optional Extension Activity:*

The following activity could be completed in order to extend students’ thinking and encourage them to make connections.

Within their pairs or small groups, students can propose their own ordinances, as if they were Arendt Van Curler or other members of the local council, which might address trade issues in the colony without banning all trade with non-Dutch merchants.

## Ordinance of the Colony of Rensselaerswyck Prohibiting Inhabitants of the Colony from Trading with the “Residents” Without Special Consent. October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1642.

A.J.F. Van Laer, *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts: Being the Letters of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, 1630-1643, and Other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck*. Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908.

We, the commissioners and councilors of the colony of Rensselaerswyck, let every one know that we have thought fit, ordered and decreed, as we hereby think fit, order and decree, for the behoof of the residents and inhabitants of the aforesaid colony, not only for good reasons us hereunto moving, but also for the further extension, confirmation and execution of our preceding ordinance, dated October 10, 1642, that none of the inhabitants of the said colony, shall presume, under any pretense whatsoever, to buy, sell, exchange, barter, or trade anything from, to or with any of the foreign residents and private traders, not to take them into their houses or lodge them without previous consent, much less to render them any assistance, wholly or in part, directly or indirectly, on forfeiture (if any one should act contrary hereto) of 200 guilders Dutch, and, the second time, of life and property, everything subject to immediate execution, without defense or contradiction. Wherefore let every one take heed and guard himself against loss.

Done in council, this 18th of October A[nno] Chri[st] 1644[1642].

By order of the honorable court of the colony of Rensselaerswyck.

Underneath was written:

To my knowledge,

*Arendt Van Curler*, Secretary

**1. Why might the colony pass an outright ban on trade for its citizens? List the ways this might impact residents in Rensselaerswyck and predict what it will mean for the economy.**

---

---

---

---

**2. Do you think this ordinance will be enforced and will residents follow it? Do you think this ordinance is truly for the “behoof of the residents and inhabitants”? Why or why not?**

---

---

---

---

**3. Put yourself in the position of Arendt Van Curler. Design a new ordinance that addresses illicit trade in New Netherland. How does your ordinance compare and contrast with the ordinance from October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1642?**

---

---

---

---

**Vocabulary:**

**Decree:** an order enforced by law  
regulation

**Behoof:** advantage

**Ordinance:** law or

**Lodge:** (v) to provide temporary shelter or quarters

**Render:** to cause or provide

**Forfeiture:** a loss due to a broken contract or agreement

**Guilder:** Dutch dollar used in Holland and its colonies

**Heed:** attention or notice