

Guide ~ Source A (1684 Indenture)

Title of your primary source: **Indenture contract**

Type of source & date: **Contract, 1684**

Author/creator: **John Gotsholl (servant) and John Bright (merchant)**

What do you know about the creator of this source?

John Gotsholl is the son of John Gotsholl, from the county of Summerset (Somerset County, in Southwest England, adjacent to Bristol, which was, along with London, one of the busiest ports in the indentured servant trade)

What information does this source give you about the living conditions of servants or what it was like to be an indentured servant in the colonies?

- **John Gotsholl was required to state that he entered the contract freely**
- **indenture was six years**
- **owner of the contract (John Bright) could sell or transfer the contract to someone else**
- **the type of work John Gotsholl would perform was not specified**
- **John Bright was required to pay for Gotsholl's passage and provide "meat, drink, apparel, lodging, washing, and other necessities" during the period of servitude**
- **after the six years, Bright was required to give Gotsholl "such other allowances, as to others are given and granted in like kind"**

Does this source present a **positive**, **negative**, or **neutral** view of indentured servitude?

Explain why?

- **encourage students to give their views of this and ask them to explain them/provide support**
- **one possibility: neutral, because**
 - **it states the obligations of both parties in the contract**
 - **it says that the servant freely entered into the contract**
 - **the legal arrangement looks like it gives the servant recourse if his basic needs are not met**
 - **it says that Gotsholl would receive something when his indenture is over, but doesn't state what that is**