



SEA Lectures | Spring 2015

Ghosts of the Atlantic: Race, Murder and Memory in the American Slaving Past

by *Dr. Sowande' Mustakeem*

Free & Open to the Public

WHEN: Saturday, Jan 31, 1:30pm

WHERE: Sea Education Association
James L. Madden Center
Lecture Hall
171 Woods Hole Road
Falmouth, MA



About the Lecture

On June 15, 1791, sailor John Cranston gave testimony before a federal grand jury to assist in deciding the legal fate of Rhode Island slave trader, James D'Wolf, who was accused of throwing an enslaved African female overboard suffering from smallpox while traveling from West Africa to the Caribbean aboard the slave ship Polly. The trans-Atlantic Slave Trade was plagued by the constant transmission of bacteria and disease. This case offers a useful window into maritime slavery and, moreover, how entangled factors of race, masculinity and power became manifested through the discarding of and subsequent murder of a diseased female captive. Using the social space of the Atlantic Ocean as viable site of trauma and suffering, this talk provides much needed attention on a black woman's experience of life and death on the high seas, while likewise going further to overturn silences surrounding memory and an active American slaving past.

About the Lecturer

Sowande' Mustakeem received her Ph.D. in Comparative Black History in 2008 from Michigan State University. She holds a jointly-appointed tenure track position in History and African & African American Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. Mustakeem has received several national fellowships and has published a number of book chapters and scholarly articles centered on the Middle Passage, including her most popular essay, "'She Must Go Overboard & Shall Go Overboard': Diseased Bodies and the Spectacle of Murder at Sea". At this current juncture, she is completing her forthcoming book manuscript entitled, "Routes of Terror: Gender, Health and Power in the Middle Passage" which provides a socio-medical history of the slave ship experience.

Sea Education Association, 171 Woods Hole Road

508-540-3954

www.sea.edu

#SEASemester