



Environmental Studies in Woods Hole & at Sea

Sea Education Association | SEA Semester • P.O. Box 6 • Woods Hole, MA 02543 • 800.552.3633 • www.sea.edu

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Renowned scholar of African American Studies, Dr. Sowande' Mustakeem to speak about America's slaving past for lecture series at the Sea Education Association campus, 171 Woods Hole Road, Falmouth on Saturday, Jan 31 at 1:30pm

January 22, 2015, Woods Hole, MA— Dr. Sowande' Mustakeem, professor of History and African and American Studies at Washington University in St. Louis will give a [free public lecture](#) about the American Slave Trade and its Middle Passage at 1:30pm on Saturday, January 31 at the Sea Education Association campus in Woods Hole. Mustakeem's lecture centers around a case in the late 1700s involving slave trader James D'Wolf of Rhode Island, accused of throwing an enslaved African female suffering from smallpox overboard while traveling from West Africa to the Caribbean aboard the slave ship *Polly*. 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. 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.

Dr. Mustakeem is visiting Sea Education Association as a guest lecturer for [SEA Semester's Colonization to Conservation in the Caribbean](#) study abroad program. As part of this semester-long program, 18 undergraduate students from colleges and universities across the country are exploring the legacy of the Caribbean region, from pre-European contact thru the present-day. In order to gain a thorough understanding of the complex social and environmental issues surrounding the modern Caribbean world, students are exploring the influential colonial history of the region by examining documents available in the John Carter Brown Library historical archive, the Marine Biological Laboratory Library's Rare Books Archive and through classes and lectures from guest professors and experts. For the second portion of this extraordinary program, students will board SEA's ocean research vessel and 134 foot brigantine sailboat, the [SSV *Corwith Cramer*](#) – their home, campus and classroom for the next 6 weeks – on February 19 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Their studies will be furthered at sea through multi-day port stops in the islands of St. Maarten, Montserrat, Dominica, Grenada, St. John and Puerto Rico, where they will confer with local experts and expand on their research.

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.

About Sea Education Association/SEA Semester®

Sea Education Association (SEA) is an internationally recognized leader in undergraduate ocean education. For nearly 45 years and over one million nautical miles sailed, SEA has educated students about the world's oceans through its Boston University accredited study abroad program, SEA Semester. SEA/SEA Semester is based on Cape Cod in the oceanographic research community of Woods Hole, Massachusetts and has two research vessels: the SSV *Corwith Cramer*, operating in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean and the SSV *Robert C. Seamans*, operating in the Pacific.

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