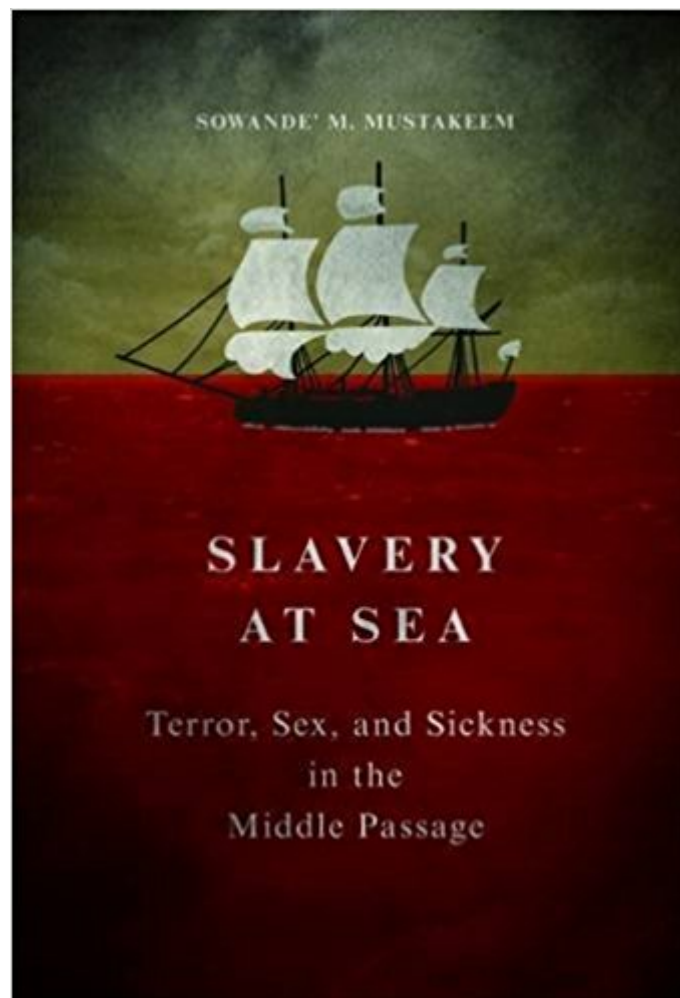




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# Slavery At Sea: Terror, Sex, And Sickness In The Middle Passage (New Black Studies Series)



## Synopsis

Most times left solely within the confine of plantation narratives, slavery was far from a land-based phenomenon. This book reveals for the first time how it took critical shape at sea. Expanding the gaze even more widely, the book centers on how the oceanic transport of human cargoes--known as the infamous Middle Passage--comprised a violently regulated process foundational to the institution of bondage. Sowande' Mustakeem's groundbreaking study goes inside the Atlantic slave trade to explore the social conditions and human costs embedded in the world of maritime slavery. Mining ship logs, records and personal documents, Mustakeem teases out the social histories produced between those on traveling ships: slaves, captains, sailors, and surgeons. As she shows, crewmen manufactured captives through enforced dependency, relentless cycles of physical, psychological terror, and pain that led to the making--and unmaking--of enslaved Africans held and transported onboard slave ships. Mustakeem relates how this process, and related power struggles, played out not just for adult men, but also for women, children, teens, infants, nursing mothers, the elderly, diseased, ailing, and dying. As she does so, she offers provocative new insights into how gender, health, age, illness, and medical treatment intersected with trauma and violence transformed human beings into the most commercially sought commodity for over four centuries.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A tremendously important contribution to understandings of the Middle Passage. This work will shift the ways scholars frame the history of slavery in the Americas by extending the terrain of

enslavement across the Atlantic and centering the lives and deaths of enslaved African women and men in the Middle Passage.--Barbara Krauthamer, author of *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South* "Slavery at Sea does an excellent job describing the importance of the Middle Passage, as well as forcefully rejecting the notion that slave subjugation began upon arrival in America" Excellent research, a clear and engaging literary style, and an appropriate use of primary source material recommend this book for the student of the Atlantic slave trade or the historian who desires new insights into the manufacturing process of slavery."--Civil War News "It is not easy to say new things about the slave trade, but Mustakeem does so, again and again. She strikes a mighty blow against the 'violence of abstraction' that has long governed the study of the subject. She makes us understand the slave trade in a new, visceral way."--Marcus Rediker, author of *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom* "An intensely social history of the transatlantic slave trade . . . Mustakeem consciously centers her narrative on the very young and old, women, and the infirm to demonstrate the ways in which there was no one Middle Passage."--The Junto "Mustakeem's groundbreaking study. . . . offers provocative new insights into how gender, health, age, illness, and medical treatment intersected with trauma and violence and transformed human beings into the world's most commercially sought commodity for over four centuries."--Huffington Post "Essential."--Choice

How slave ships manufactured bondage from the raw material of humanity

This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the learning about the middle passage. Mustakeem reconstructs the lives of black women, men, and children in the middle passage, reclaiming a history from the documents left behind by white men. One of my favorite parts about this book is that Mustakeem devotes specific attention to black women, whose specific struggles are often ignored in the critical scholarship on slavery. This book is eye-opening and sure to broaden your understanding of what the middle passage was like.

This book offers so many different points of view of the Middle Passage that many would never consider. Usually, many slavery movies, tv shows, books, etc. focuses on men and their horrible circumstances on plantations. This book explores more than that; it describes the journeys of women, children, the elderly, the sickly, and the suicidal and how they dealt with their journey from their homeland to enslavement. If you ever wondered about how the Middle Passage negatively

impacted bondpeople before the plantations ever did, read this book. It's not boring, nor extravagantly written; it's easy to read and you'll gain a new perspective and awareness.

There are many books about conditions on American plantations, but "Slavery at Sea" sheds light on another ugly part of the slave trade, the Middle Passage. It was very interesting to learn about some of the motivations and actions of crew members as well as the conditions that existed on slave ships. The stories in Mustakeem's book really put faces on the people used and abused on the slave trade, particularly those lost on the journey through the Atlantic to America. Well written and a must-read.

Outstanding, riveting account of an overlooked key component of history.

This book takes research on slavery and the middle passage to a whole other level. It is obvious Dr. Mustakeem went to extreme lengths to dig even deeper on the study of this topic. Instead of just a surface level description of this crossing, the author provides real horrific stories of not just the able bodied men on the ship as most history books focus on, but of the women, children, and sick passengers that inevitably were aboard. This book stands out from the others as it provides this history lesson from perspectives never examined before- crew members, captains, women, children... It is an important addition to the study of the slave trade, and helps fill in some overlooked gaps in the recounting of history.

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