



By @dreph Credit: Neal Campbell

Global Equiano

20 and 21 September, 2024
A Virtual, Free, Global two-day event

Sponsored by:
Early Caribbean Society
University of Winnipeg, CUNY, K-SAA, Mount
Holyoke College
KEYNOTES: Dionne Brand, Deborah McDowell,
Hakim Adi

Global Equiano invites new discussions of and engagements with Olaudah Equiano, author of *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano* (1789). It situates Equiano within a mobile, Black, global, diasporic context, emanating from the Black Atlantic, in order to open fresh conversations about him, and other enslaved and free Black people, as they navigated and moved through spaces dominated by the violent colonial forces of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Equiano speaks for and with a wide, Black, diasporic community that found itself scattered and spread by the unprecedented global dynamics of racial capitalism. His story is one of blackness and mobile Indigeneity, described by Hazel Carby as “offering a way of being—of transnational being and becoming,” resistant to the disciplines of then and now. At the same time, as Dionne Brand states, we continue to live in “the global state of emergency of antiblackness”: this emergency requires urgent responses. *Global Equiano* attempts to do justice to the complex, spatially unbounded, disruptive story that Equiano tells us, perpetuating the legacies that his emancipatory politics insist we follow. What energies does Equiano mobilize that can aid us as we seek to unmake the structures of antiblackness he navigated? How can we unmake the politics of periodicity and liberal humanism that seem to frame Equiano for us today? What readings, theoretical approaches, and artistic responses are needed to fully grasp Equiano’s formal and generic creativity? What grammars and languages are needed to actuate Equiano’s visions of freedom?

Global Equiano will offer a free virtual space to connect scholars, creative practitioners, writers, community activists, local historians and artists, globally. Through a series of keynotes, seminars, and roundtables, the event will move Equiano’s positioning beyond liberal humanism, focusing on his critique of race and capitalism, and the politics of Black emancipation, including acknowledging his nonnormative feminism and sensitivity to the nonhuman world. It is hoped that visual artists, children’s authors, social media practitioners, and community activists will gather in conversations about Equiano’s meanings beyond the academy and the capacity of his works to amplify unheard voices then and now.

Submissions are invited by 1 May:

Email: k.sinanan@uwinnipeg.ca and Desha.Osborne@ed.ac.uk

Global Equiano aims to depart from traditional conference structures. We would like submissions for three types of sessions: **Reading Seminars**, **Roundtables**, and **Individual Reflections**. The options are to livestream on 20-21 September, **or** to pre-record so there is flexibility.

READING SEMINARS:

Seminar leaders will choose a topic and put together reading materials and a group of scholars to discuss the readings. These spaces can also offer discussions of portions of work-in-progress and/or other texts and scholarship relating to Equiano for study and discussion. Seminar participants will read materials ahead of time for a virtual convener-led discussion to be recorded and posted as part of the virtual event. We very much hope these seminars will be spaces to think carefully together on specific, occluded, important topics such as (but not limited to) the following. Sessions should be planned to be 1 hour and 15 mins. **Submissions 300 words.**

- **Equiano Beyond Liberal Humanism**
- **Equiano's Critique of Race & the Politics of Emancipation**
- **Equiano and Gender**
- **Black Diaspora/Mobilities**
- **Equiano & the Sons of Africa**
- **Equiano and Political Economy**
- **Black diaspora life writing**
- **Thinking with and beyond Equiano**
- **Black Studies and Equiano**
- **Equiano and Black Ontologies**
- **Black Atlantic freedoms**

ROUNDTABLES

Submissions are invited for complete roundtables of 3-5 participants which offer connected short talks. They can also be spaces for amplifying unheard voices and for putting scholars in conversation with artists, teachers, community workers and historians. Roundtables should be planned to be 1 hour and 15 mins. **Submissions 300 words.** These topics can be on any relevant issue such as (but not limited to)

- **Teaching Equiano**
- **Equiano and the Visual Arts**
- **Appropriations of Equiano and Black lives**
- **Equiano in the Celtic Discourse**
- **Equiano and the Caribbean**
- **Equiano and Racial Capitalism**
- **Black Atlantic Multimedia**

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTIONS

We invite short individual meditations, readings, responses to Equiano's work and anything inspired by his narrative from close reading, to personal stories, to intertextual connections. Please summarise your idea for reflection in **submissions of 100 words.**