Face Down: What exactly is Planking?

Posted on Jul 13, Posted by LaToya Sutton Category Falcon Students

Planking is a term easily found as a trending topic on Twitter or a large video source on YouTube yet the actual origin, purpose and definition of what exactly it is remains rather nebulous. According to BBC World News planking is defined as: “a prank that involves lying face down in a public place, with photos posted on social networking sites.” BBC News goes on to report that the origin of planking is highly disputed, but it either started in 2000 as the then aptly named “Lying Down” game or by some Australian teenagers in 2008 with the name planking. Essentially, planking is a borderline outrageous joke, which leads one to question why it has gained such popularity and media attention lately, possibly it was the death of an Australian man who decided to plank on the ledge of a multistory building or it could be the increase of celebrities posting pictures on social media sites planking. Planking’s spurt of recent popularity is unknown but undeniable nonetheless.

In addition, planking has caused some controversy due to members of the African American community being outraged by the eerie resemblance between some planking pictures and how slaves were packed into slave ships before being transported across the Atlantic Ocean during the Atlantic Slave trade. On top of the visual correlation, some African Americans have stated the term “planking” originated from slavery. As revealed by the grio.com, if one types “slave ship” into Wikipedia, they will stumble upon a sentence that reads as follows: “Often the ships, also known as Guineamen, transported hundreds of slaves, who were chained tightly to plank beds” Some would argue that it is a stretch to link a childish attempt for attention to one of the greatest atrocities in the history of mankind, known as slavery. One could even argue that planking is dangerous due to the 20-year-old Australian losing his life while planking.

But the facts remain those who find planking offensive will continue to protest it and refuse to do it and those who choose to plank should remember to plank responsibly.

For more information on planking visit the following links:

BBC.com
thegrio.com

Tags: Tagged in: australia planking slave ships