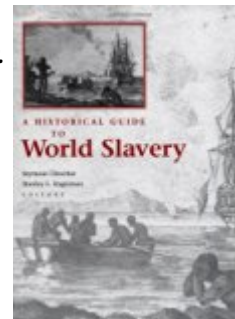


Seymour Drescher, Stanley L. Engerman, eds.. *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. xxiv + 429 pp. \$75.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-19-512091-2.



Reviewed by Robert Whaples

Published on EH.Net (July, 1999)

Seymour Drescher (University of Pittsburgh) and Stanley Engerman (University of Rochester) have assembled a stellar cast which has written an exceptionally useful reference book. The goal of the nearly one hundred contributors to *A Historical Guide to World Slavery* is to bring slavery into a "worldwide and cross-cultural focus." The entries in this volume do this very well. They will be useful to students and scholars alike, as they provide both an accessible overview of the complexities of the subject and a starting point for further research. The authors' collective ability to be simultaneously concise and informative is striking.

The entries cover an impressive range. The volume begins with a twenty-seven page entry on "Abolition and Anti-Slavery" in which individual authors examine events in Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Britain, Continental Europe, Latin America, and the United States. It closes with a short essay on "Wage Slavery." In between are a wide range of entries covering topics such as "Art and Illustration," "Biblical Literature," "Family," "Forced Labor: Soviet Union," "Gender and Slav-

ery," "Historiography," "Manumission," "Maroons," "Middle Passage," "Nazi Slavery," "Psychology," "Race and Racism," "Religion," "Reproduction," "Revolts," "Serfdom," and "Urban Slavery." Points of interest include an introductory essay on "The Problem of Slavery" by David Brion Davis, a six-page entry on "Contemporary Slavery" and an unexpectedly detailed three-page entry on "Eunuchs." Nearly one-quarter of the guide focuses on slavery in particular regions and countries, including Africa (23 pages), Asia (11 pages), Brazil, Canada, the Caribbean (22 pages), Central America, China, Europe, the Mediterranean, Oceania, Russia, South America, and the United States (10 pages).

EH.Net subscribers will find this work to be a valuable resource. Among the entries that will be of most interest to economic historians are those on:

*The "Asiento" (the monopoly contract awarded by Spain to supply her colonies in the Americas with African slaves) by Colin Palmer. *"Capitalism and Slavery" in which Joseph Inikori argues that recently "discovered evidence and newer analyti-

cal frameworks ... make it clear that African slavery in the Americas was a critical factor in the development of capitalism in England between 1650 and 1850" (p. 109). **"Demography"* by Barry Higman. **"Economics"* in which Richard Steckel focuses mainly on the U.S. South. He concludes that research "in the past two decades has overturned the image of slaves as lazy and inept, established slave-owners as rational capitalists, demonstrated that Southerners were largely independent of Western food supplies, and shown that slave workers were well-nourished while young children had extraordinarily poor health" (p. 183). **"Forced Labor"* by Ralph Shlomowitz, which examines indentured servitude, convict labor, and other similar institutions around the world. **"Indentured Servitude"* by David Galenson. **"Industrial Slavery"* by Charles Dew. **"Mortality in Transport"* by Raymond Cohn. **"Occupations"* by David Murray. **"Penal Slavery"* by Farley Grubb. *A seven-part entry on the "Slave Trade" by Ralph Shlomowitz, Ross Samson, Ralph Austen, David Eltis, Robert Edgar Conrad, David Murray, and David Richardson *And an entry on slavery in the U.S. South in which Gavin Wright points out that "North American slavery was less essential to the economy than was true for most other major slave systems" (p. 401), provides an extended discussion of the "efficiency" debate, and concludes that "slavery in the American South did not create an economy well-suited for rapid integration into the capitalist world" (p. 405).

This guide will be an especially helpful teaching tool. It is a must for any college library.

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Citation: Robert Whaples. Review of Drescher, Seymour; Engerman, Stanley L., eds. *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*. EH.Net, H-Net Reviews. July, 1999.

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