

History 693
Short Unit Paper #1

Instructions:

In this unit paper you are to write this essay based on a question. In order to answer the question you are to utilize the materials we have read for class, and what we have discussed during class. The paper must be typed and four to five pages long. Please remember when citing materials you must utilize Chicago Manual of Style.

Please submit your paper to Turnitin.com

Course ID: 9380752

Password: freedom

During the past weeks we have engaged one of the most enduring historiographical debates in the historical field of Slavery. The debate is driven by the publications of Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*, and Seymour Drescher's refutation of Williams's decline thesis in his book, *Econocide*. Drescher builds his argument around the assertion that when the slave trade was abolished in 1807, Britain's wealth was at its height, and so was the wealth of the sugar colonies of the Caribbean. His argument follows that due to huge humanitarian pressure, the British government did the right thing, and abolished slavery, running the risk of committing "econocide". He then states that slavery and sugar in the British West Indies (BWI) went into terminal decline, as a result of this bold humanitarian move (Drescher, p142, and p160).

Prompt Question: Examine both of these authors' main points/thesis, and explain why this debate has lasted over 35 years. Please use evidence to support your argument(s).