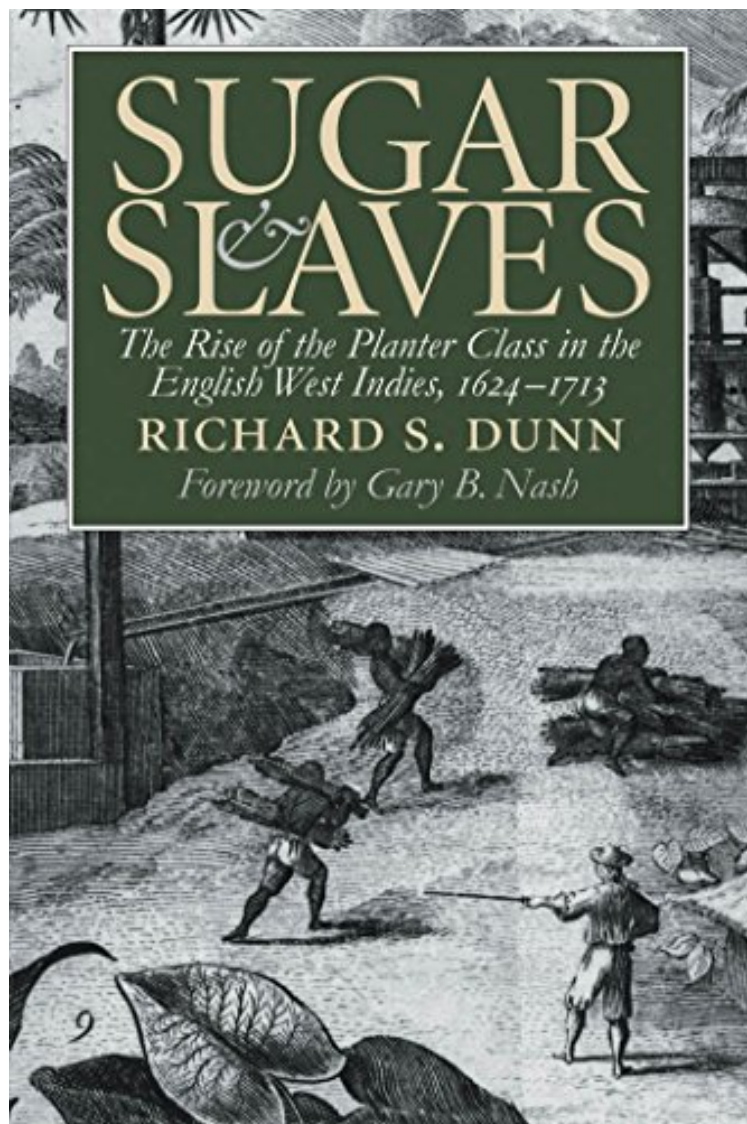


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Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History ... and the University of North Carolina Press)

Richard S. Dunn

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History ... and the University of North Carolina Press):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Overlooked Aspect of American History By Desert Rat An excellent and informative book. We were all taught in elementary school (in the US, anyway) about the Pilgrims at Plymouth and about the Virginia colony. But before those came Barbados, the Windward Isles and Jamaica. The initial English effort for new world colonies was the Caribbean rather than the mainland to the north. The history of that area is colorful -- pirates, privateers, buccaneers, fast money and early death. In comparison New England and Virginia were cake walks. The social, political and economic development of those islands took a different course from the thirteen colonies best described as as down right brutal. The English who went there didn't come so much to create a new society but to get in, get rich and get out. Life expectancy was low even for those at the top of the social hierarchy. For indentured servants and slaves it was even lower. And speaking of slaves, the Caribbean was where the English first began using slave to any significant degree. The motivation was sugar. Sugar was the get-rich-quick commodity of the 16th and 17th century. Tobacco, indigo and cotton were also cash crops but the profit margin was lower and it does not appear that utilizing slave vs indentured or free labor had as distinct an economic advantage. If you wanted to get rich fast in 1630-1750 you invested in a sugar plantation (don't forget the byproducts molasses and especially rum) and after the land itself the the most essential asset you had to buy were people. The author, Dunn, was faced with a major difficulty when writing this book -- there is sparse documentation from the period. Profits more than prosperity drove the early English settlers in islands. Despite this the author has been able to construct a reasonably convincing narrative of the development of the English planter system from inception to maturity by the early 18th century. While little is known about the lives of the English in the time and place even less is known about the slaves. This in itself probably tells you something about the conditions of the slaves. If the reader is interested in how and why black slavery in the Americas came to be this book is a good place to start. However, many questions will remain open and may never have an answer we can comprehend. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As I have just done a major research project on ... By MM Goodwin As I have just done a major research project on the history of slavery here in my county on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, this book has been enormously helpful with the background and connections of the Caribbean slave trade to that of the Chesapeake Bay. I am most thankful for this scholarly work! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Charles A must read

First published by UNC Press in 1972, *Sugar and Slaves* presents a vivid portrait of English life in the Caribbean more than three centuries ago. Using a host of contemporary primary sources, Richard Dunn traces the development of plantation slave society in the region. He examines sugar production techniques, the vicious character of the slave trade, the problems of adapting English ways to the tropics, and the appalling mortality rates for both blacks and whites that made these colonies the richest, but in human terms the least successful, in English America. "A masterly analysis of the Caribbean plantation slave society, its lifestyles, ethnic relations, afflictions, and peculiarities." -- *Journal of Modern History* "A remarkable account of the rise of the planter class in the West Indies. . . . Dunn's [work] is rich social history, based on factual data brought to life by his use of contemporary narrative accounts." -- *New York Review of Books* "A study of major importance. . . . Dunn not only provides the most solid and precise account ever written of the social development of the British West Indies down to 1713, he also challenges some traditional historical clichés." -- *American Historical Review*

Dunn's work is a model of contemporary historical research. He writes with admirable clarity. "London Financial Times" "Professor Dunn has written an excellent book: not only is it informative, it is also readable." *Business History* "[This] elegantly written book is easily the finest on the subject and a major addition to colonial scholarship." *Journal of Economic History* "A masterly analysis of the Caribbean plantation slave society, its lifestyles, ethnic relations, afflictions, and peculiarities." *Journal of Modern History* "Dunn's is rich social history, based on factual data brought to life by his use of contemporary narrative accounts." Willie Lee Rose, "New York Review of Books" "Professor Dunn has written an excellent book: not only is it informative, it is also readable." *Business History* "This elegantly written book is easily the finest on the subject and a major addition to colonial scholarship." *Journal of Economic History* "A masterly analysis of the Caribbean plantation slave society, its lifestyles, ethnic relations, afflictions, and peculiarities." *Journal of Modern History* "Dunn's is rich social history, based on factual data brought to life by his use of contemporary narrative accounts." Willie Lee Rose, "New York Review of Books" "A study of major importance: the first systematic and extended account of the emergence and character of an elite group for any of the English colonies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. . . . Dunn not only provides the most solid and precise account ever written of the social development of the British West Indies down to 1713, he also challenges some traditional historical clichés." -- Jack P. Greene, *American Historical Review* "A remarkable account of the rise of the planter class in the West Indies. . . . Dunn's is rich social history, based on factual data brought to life by his use of contemporary

narrative accounts.--Willie Lee Rose, New York of BooksDunn's work is a model of contemporary historical research. He writes with admirable clarity.--London Financial TimesA masterly analysis of the Caribbean plantation slave society, its lifestyles, ethnic relations, afflictions, and peculiarities.--Journal of Modern History[This] elegantly written book is easily the finest on the subject and a major addition to colonial scholarship.--Journal of Economic HistoryShould be necessary reading for those concerned with slavery and slave societies, as well as colonial development in the Western Hemisphere in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Professor Dunn has written an excellent book: not only is it informative, it is also readable.--Business History [Features] lively and well-informed discussions of the West Indian economy, society, culture, and political organization in the seventeenth century.--Elsa V. Goveia, William and Mary QuarterlyFrom the Inside FlapDrawing upon such sources as travelers' accounts, plantation records, census returns, wills, inventories, land patents, maps, and parish registers, Richard Dunn presents a composite portrait of plantation life in the Caribbean three centuries ago.