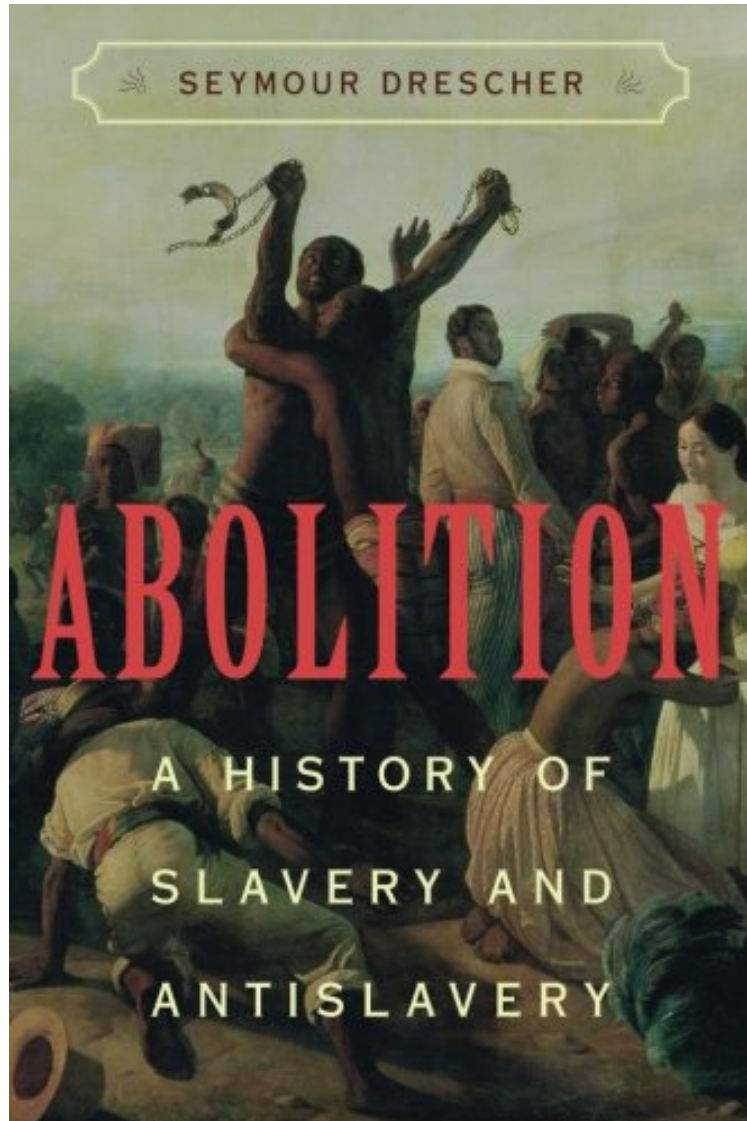


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# Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery

*Seymour Drescher*

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found the following review helpful. Slavery is an excellent book by Cosby Morton. Excellent book on slavery. A little detailed on slavery but full of references for further reading of study. If you are wanted to find out too facts about slavery in the world this is a must read.

In one form or another, slavery has existed throughout the world for millennia. It helped to change the world, and the world transformed the institution. In the 1450s, when Europeans from the small corner of the globe least enmeshed in the institution first interacted with peoples of other continents, they created, in the Americas, the most dynamic, productive, and exploitative system of coerced labor in human history. Three centuries later these same intercontinental actions produced a movement that successfully challenged the institution at the peak of its dynamism. Within another century a new surge of European expansion constructed Old World empires under the banner of antislavery. However, twentieth-century Europe itself was inundated by a new system of slavery, larger and more deadly than its earlier system of New World slavery. This book examines these dramatic expansions and contractions of the institution of slavery and the impact of violence, economics, and civil society in the ebb and flow of slavery and antislavery during the last five centuries.

"Seymour Drescher now provides the broadest and most comprehensive account we have of the rise and fall of global slavery as well as the reversion in the twentieth century to massive systems of coerced labor which he compares in fascinating ways to the racial slavery that had dominated the New World for well over three centuries. Highly detailed on abolitionism as well as bondage, *Abolition* conveys sober truths regarding the shocking realities and potentialities of human nature, some frightening glimpses of even worse scenarios that we avoided, and final appreciation of the world's most important gains in human rights." - David Brion Davis, author of *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*"In the now vast literature on the rise and fall of slavery around the globe there is nothing that comes close to this magisterial comparative survey of abolition and abolitionism. Comprehensive in coverage in both time and space, it ranges elegantly over difficult issues and offers startling insights and asides on every page." - David Eltis, Emory University"In this superb work of historical scholarship, Seymour Drescher has provided a highly detailed examination of the rise and fall of slavery from about the fifteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. The broad sweep and great depth of this book describe not only the key cultural, religious, moral, and economic developments, but also the groups and individuals responsible for the important changes. In examining the relationship of slavery and abolition in a broad historical context, Drescher has made a major contribution to the study of world history as well as to the study of individual nations and groups." - Stanley L. Engerman, University of Rochester"Abolition traces the articulation of the 'freedom principle' in Europe, the rise and fall of enslavement of non-Europeans beyond the colonial line, and the reversion of the principle in 20th century Europe. In doing so, it masterfully demonstrates the complexity and fragility of the boundary between freedom and coercion since Columbus." - David Richardson, Wilberforce Institute, University of Hull"This is the work of a master craftsman at the height of his powers. This book is no ordinary survey: it manages the rare feat of having chronological and global reach, and yet says something arresting at each point. Drescher combines an unusual mastery of the expansive literature with an ability to weave a flowing and persuasive narrative. From the world of classical antiquity to the Russian Gulag, Drescher's analysis is readable, original and often provocative: an important contribution which will allow readers to take stock of the centrality - and the conundrums - of slavery in its wider settings." - James Walvin, University of York, England"I believe *Abolition* is the most comprehensive, detailed, and integrated account of its subjects yet to appear, concentrating on the Americas but including fascinating digressions and comparisons that involve much of the rest of the world. The book is encyclopedic but Drescher is superb at giving frequent overviews of a big picture, charting the expansion and contraction of his subjects over a period of twenty to fifty years. And there are valuable insights, to say nothing of enlightening information, on almost every page." --David Brion Davis, *The New York Times*"This impressively researched book is rich with insight and nuance, required reading for those interested in slavery and abolition's global and historical dimensions. Essential." -Choice"...Abolition offers a sweeping, comprehensive study of the uneven rise of antislavery." -Gregory E. O'Malley, *New West Indian Guide*About the AuthorSeymour Drescher is University Professor of History and Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. He has taught at Harvard University and was Distinguished Professor at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Dr Drescher has also been a Fulbright Scholar, an NEH Fellow, and a Guggenheim Fellow, and he was both a Fellow and the inaugural Secretary of the European Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Among his many works on slavery and abolition are *Capitalism and Antislavery* (1986); *From Slavery to Freedom* (1999); and *The Mighty Experiment* (2002), which was awarded the Frederick Douglass Book Prize by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition in 2003. He has also co-edited a number of books, including *A Historical Guide to World Slavery* (1998) and *Slavery* (2001).