Seymour Drescher, a professor and historian specializing in the study of slavery and abolition, especially as it relates to the Atlantic region, is a respected authority in the field. His, "The Long Goodbye: Dutch Capitalism and Antislavery in Comparative Perspective," focuses on the slow, and relatively late process of emancipation in the Dutch colonies. While the focus of this piece is not strictly the abolition of slavery in Suriname, it serves as a model for future study and as an excellent foundational source for those interested in the study of the role of slavery in the Dutch empire. A key theme throughout Drescher’s text is the role of capitalism and its direct impact on the process of emancipation. Drescher notes that slave labor was “economically viable throughout the age of emancipation,” suggesting that slave labor was, in fact, not economically inferior as many contemporary abolitionists argued (46). A large portion of Drescher’s study is dedicated to the author’s navigation of the economic support of abolitionism with a focus on the conceptualization of the economic impact of slavery in the Netherlands. Intriguingly, Drescher argues there were “few antislavery arguments and no abolitionist movements” in the Netherlands during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries (49). The lack of such movements, especially in consideration of contemporaneous movements in other countries in Europe, opens a line of discussion concerning the Dutch influence abroad. Relevant here is the fact that neither the health of the seventeenth-century Dutch economy nor its decline during the late eighteenth-century stimulated a significant antislavery movement in the Netherlands. Drescher used this fact to call to question the assumption of the primary role of the economy in generating an abolitionist dialogue, pointing instead to collective behavior and a growing interest in the rights of individuals. This article is valuable to scholars considering Suriname as a starting point in research of the abolition of slavery and as a means to facilitate the discussion of the driving forces behind abolitionist thought, especially as it related to the Dutch global presence.

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