

ABSTRACT

**Management And The British West Indian
Sugar Industry 1750 - 1810**

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The aim of this thesis is to examine managerial developments in the sugar industry between 1750 and 1810. The study also seeks to place the management responses in the context of its cultural environment. The argument advanced is that planters rapidly adopted the innovations immediately necessary for the survival of the sugar industry, and adopted more selectively other innovations in accordance with the availability of resources and market forces.

As a result traditional views of the planters as being conservative, or accusations of their leaving change implementation to chance must be reviewed. Planters and attorneys did what they thought was best in the context of the alternatives open to them. Four phases of change have been identified 1720-1750; 1750-1776; 1776-1780; and 1780-1810. Each was stimulated by distinctive developments as the planters attempted to maintain the sugar industry so as to ensure their survival. Three specific areas of management are

examined. The sugar industry is analyzed according to its input, throughput and output subsystems; attempts to increase efficiency are examined; and attempts at self-sufficiency are also highlighted.

To explore these themes the study examines events, trends and movements in the sugar industry as well as environmental forces. The ultimate aim is to furnish a conceptual framework for understanding individuals and their approach to the solution of management problems. Extensive use is made of both primary and secondary sources. Heavy reliance is placed on plantation records but these records have been liberally supported with other primary source material as well as all relevant secondary sources.

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