

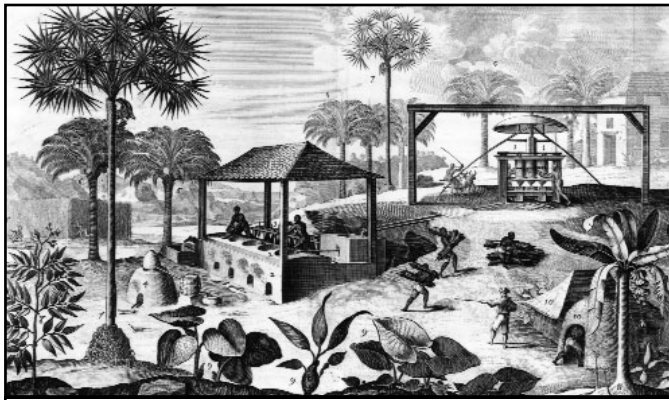
Unit Activities

Activity 3: Early Consumer Boycotts—30 minutes

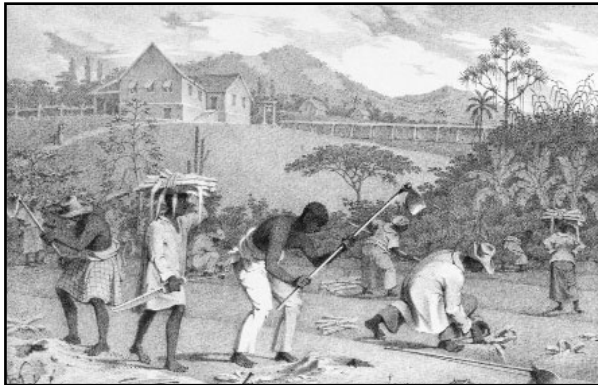
Consumer boycotts against products were most common in the later twentieth century. Some boycotts occurred earlier—against foods produced by African slaves as a protest against the institution of slavery. For example, in England an abolitionist pamphlet declared,

As the Englishman sweetens his tea, let him reflect on the bitterness at the bottom of the cup. (Jenny Sharpe, “The Rise of Women in an Age of Progress: Jane Eyre,” in *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* [Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987]: 27.)

Look at the following images of slavery in the Americas. What other products might abolitionists urge their fellow citizens to boycott? Try to create a catchy slogan to persuade European consumers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries not to purchase or consume those products.



Item #3114. Anonymous, WEST INDIES: MANUFACTURE OF SUGAR (1667). Courtesy of The Library of Congress.



Item #3820. Richard Bridgens, PLANTING THE SUGAR CANE (1836). By Permission of the British Library.



Item #4917. Empire Marketing Board, GATHERING COCOA PODS, EMPIRE MARKETING BOARD (c. 1927–1933). Courtesy of The Image Works.