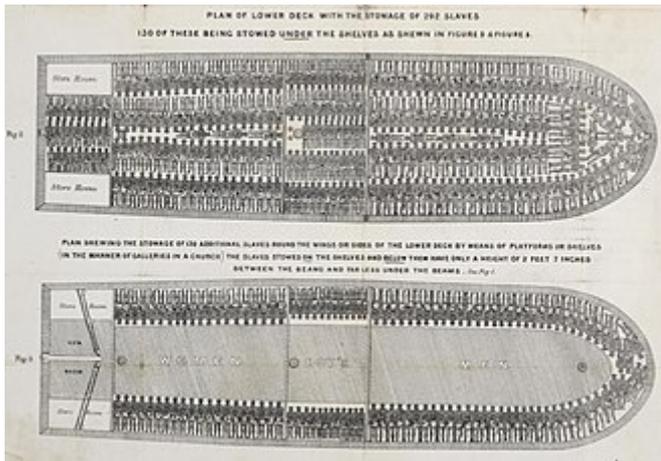


RESEARCH & CAMPAIGNS

Slaves, Sugar and Chocolate



Over a period from the 16th to the 19th centuries existed a trade in enslaved native Africans known as [The Transatlantic Slave Trade](#).

The Transatlantic Slave Trade flourished because a market existed for produce created using enslaved labour: rum, cotton, tobacco, coffee and particularly sugar.

The production of sugar using slaves was extremely brutal with many of the Africans dying within just a very few years of arriving at the plantations.

In popular culture, the Zombie has become a 'cult' figure and is often depicted in films shown around the time of [Halloween](#), whitewashing its origins. The Zombie, as we know it, has a tragic and forgotten history. The Zombie owes its heritage to Haitian slaves, who imagined being imprisoned in their bodies forever. The myth began in 17th and 18th century Haiti where African slaves were made to work on the sugar plantations. The [Zombie](#) was a mirror of the horrors of slavery and the possibility of an after-life of condemnation on the sugar plantations for eternity.



Sugar, in the form of 'candy' or 'sweets' has become synonymous with Halloween but it has a tainted and bitter little known or perhaps, poorly considered side.

Big retail candy developed in America from around the 1920's. Its foundations were rooted in a racially differentiated one. The companies wanted to produce one type of candy for Black Americans and produce other types of candy for whites and along with that type of production and consumption were images underlining the notions of inferiority among Black Americans and superiority among white Americans.



No race, creed or color in candy's appeal. Irish, Chinese and Negro lads snapped as one of San Francisco's Candy Day stunts

Expensive hand-dipped chocolates were intended for white Americans and cheap stick candy was targeted at African-American and immigrant Irish and Chinese. Race lines were maintained in the production of candy. African-American women were employed in factories making cheap candy while young white women only were employed to hand-dip candy in warm chocolate, since it was such an intimate act.

By the 1970's colourful, plastic wrapped candy became the more popular Halloween giveaway for [trick or treaters](#).

[Chocolate](#) made from the fruit of the Theobroma cacao (fruit of the gods) tree, the most popular sweet treat in the world, is also a popular Halloween giveaway. Many people are unaware that they are funding child slaves in West Africa by buying most of the [major brands](#). Nearly, two thirds of all cacao beans on the planet are harvested by young children, working 80 to 100 hours a week with no pay, no education, are under fed and are often viciously beaten if they try to [escape](#).



Slavery may have been abolished over a hundred years ago but it is still very much alive today and it flourishes because the market for the produce it creates is driving its continued existence.