

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

STUDIES IN INTERDISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Edited by ROBERT I. ROTBERG and THEODORE K. RABB

British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

OTHER BOOKS IN THE SERIES

Hunger and History: The Impact of Changing Food Production and Consumption Patterns on Society, edited by Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb

Population and Economy: Population and History from the Traditional to the Modern World, edited by Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery

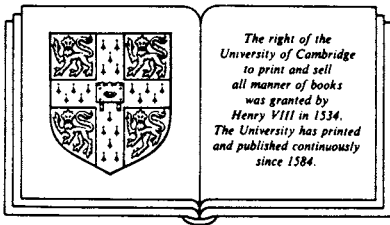
The Legacy of Eric Williams

BARBARA L. SOLOW

Harvard University

STANLEY L. ENGERMAN

University of Rochester



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

NEW YORK NEW ROCHELLE MELBOURNE SYDNEY

Cambridge University Press
 0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams
 Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 1987

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1987

First paperback edition 2004

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

British capitalism and Caribbean slavery.

Papers originally presented at the Rockefeller Study
 and Conference Center at Bellagio, Italy, May 21-25,
 1984.

I. Slave trade—West Indies, British—History—Congresses. 2. Slave trade—Great Britain—History—Congresses. 3. Great Britain—Economic conditions—1760-1860—Congresses. 4. Williams, Eric Eustace, 1911—Congresses I. Solow, Barbara L. (Barbara Lewis)
 II. Engerman, Stanley L.

HT1092.B75 1987 306'.362'09729 86-31771

ISBN 0 521 33478 0 hardback

ISBN 0 521 53320 1 paperback

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

List of Contributors	page vii
Preface	ix
British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams: An Introduction <i>Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman</i>	I
Part I. Slavery as an Economic Phenomenon	
Race and Slavery: Considerations on the Williams Thesis <i>William A. Green</i>	25
Part II. Caribbean Slavery and the Industrial Revolution	
Capitalism and Slavery in the Exceedingly Long Run <i>Barbara L. Solow</i>	51
Slavery and the Development of Industrial Capitalism in England <i>Joseph E. Inikori</i>	79
The Slave Trade, Sugar, and British Economic Growth, 1748–1776 <i>David Richardson</i>	103
Part III. The Decline of the British West Indies	
The American Revolution and the British West Indies' Economy <i>Selwyn H. H. Carrington</i>	135
“Dreadful Idlers” in the Cane Fields: The Slave Labor Pattern on a Jamaican Sugar Estate, 1762–1831 <i>Richard S. Dunn</i>	163
Part IV. The Basis of Abolition and Emancipation	
Paradigms Tossed: Capitalism and the Political Sources of Abolition <i>Seymour Drescher</i>	191

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi | CONTENTS

Capitalism, Abolitionism, and Hegemony <i>David Brion Davis</i>	209
Eric Williams and Abolition: The Birth of a New Orthodoxy <i>Howard Temperley</i>	229
What and Who to Whom and What: The Significance of Slave Resistance <i>Michael Craton</i>	259
Part V. Capitalism and Slavery in Historical Perspective	
Capitalism and Slavery on the Islands: A Lesson from the Mainland <i>Gavin Wright</i>	283
“The Williams Effect”: Eric Williams’s <i>Capitalism and Slavery</i> and the Growth of West Indian Political Economy <i>Hilary McD. Beckles</i>	303
Eric Williams and <i>Capitalism and Slavery</i> : A Biographical and Historiographical Essay <i>Richard B. Sheridan</i>	317

Contributors

Hilary McD. Beckles, Department of History, University of the West Indies, Bridgetown, Barbados

Selwyn H. H. Carrington, Department of History, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad

Michael Craton, Department of History, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario

David Brion Davis, Department of History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Seymour Drescher, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Richard S. Dunn, Department of History, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Stanley L. Engerman, Departments of Economics and History, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York

William A. Green, Department of History, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts

Joseph E. Inikori, Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

David Richardson, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Hull, Yorkshire, England

Richard B. Sheridan, Department of Economics, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

Barbara L. Solow, W. E. B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Howard Temperley, School of English and American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich, England

Gavin Wright, Department of Economics, Stanford University, Stanford, California

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944) defined the study of Caribbean history, and its writing affected the course of Caribbean history. He initiated modern scholarship on the historical relation between the British West Indies and Great Britain. The themes of *Capitalism and Slavery* remain the themes of Caribbean history, and current controversies are being debated in the terms in which Williams posed them. Scholars may agree or disagree with his ideas, but they remain the starting point of discussion. Henry Steele Commager's verdict of 1944—that *Capitalism and Slavery* is “one of the most learned, most penetrating and most significant [books] that has appeared in this field of history”—is still true today.

Any conference on British capitalism and Caribbean slavery is a conference on the work of Eric Williams. This volume consists of papers originally presented at the Rockefeller Study and Conference Center at Bellagio, Italy, on May 21–25, 1984. It honors Eric Williams in the way he would have liked best: by subjecting to the best modern scholarship from America, Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean the ideas that he advanced nearly half a century ago.

We would like to thank the following participants in the conference for their valuable contributions in discussion and comment: Roy Augier, Bridget Brereton, William A. Darity, Jr., David Eltis, Alastair Hennessy, Herbert S. Klein, Patrick O'Brien, Orlando Patterson, Robert I. Rotberg, and Paul Sutton.

We would also like to thank the Rockefeller Foundation and the staff at the Center at Bellagio for making this facility available. We are grateful for financial assistance to the Amoco Foundation; the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation; and, in Trinidad and Tobago, to the government of Trinidad and Tobago, Honorable George Chambers, Prime Minister; Butler's Limited; National Commercial Bank; National Energy Corporation; National Flour Mills; National Petroleum; Trinidad Tesoro Petroleum Com-

Cambridge University Press

0521533201 - British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x | PREFACE

pany, Ltd.; and Yorke Structures Limited. Much of the editing was completed while Engerman was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, California, with financial support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as well as support from the National Science Foundation and the University of Rochester, and Solow was a Research Associate at the W. E. B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research of Harvard University. The papers by Barbara L. Solow, Joseph E. Inikori, David Richardson, Selwyn H. H. Carrington, Richard S. Dunn, and Gavin Wright appeared as a special issue of *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Volume XVII, Number 4, Spring 1987). We would like to thank the editors of the Journal, Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, and the Managing Editor, Rhoda Fischer, for their editorial advice and assistance.

Barbara L. Solow
Stanley L. Engerman