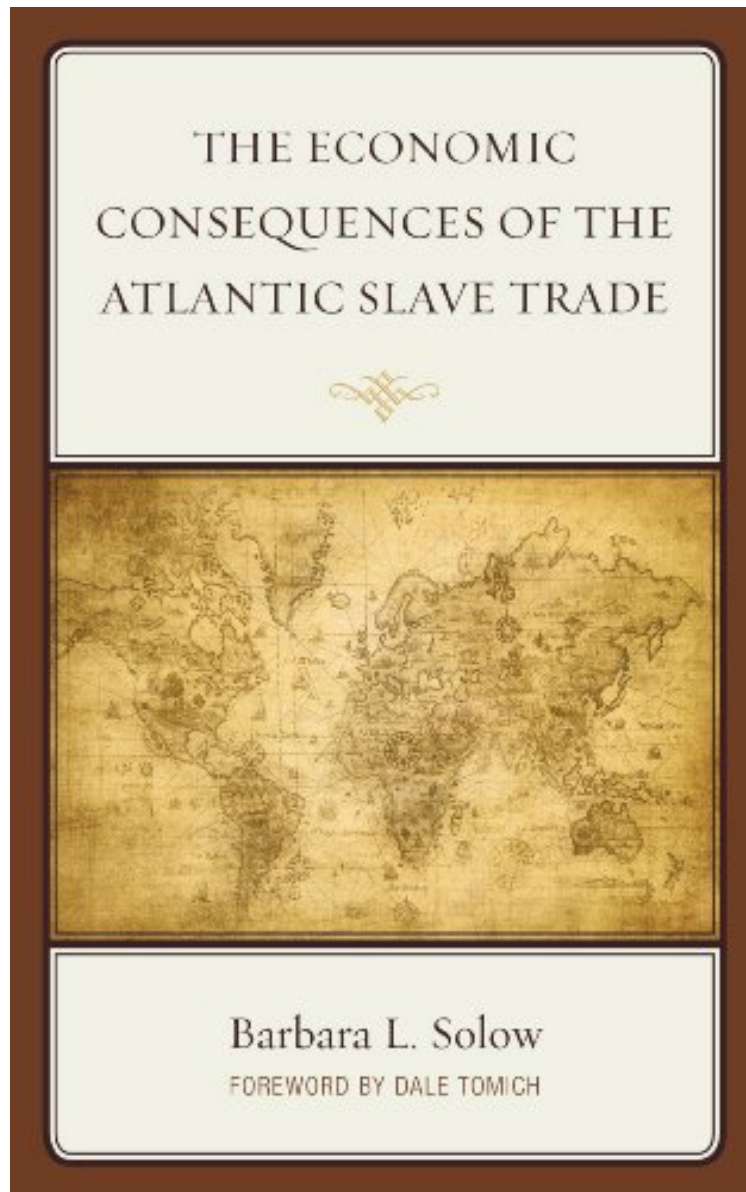


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The Economic Consequences of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Barbara L. Solow

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Barbara L. Solow : The Economic Consequences of the Atlantic Slave Trade before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Economic Consequences of the Atlantic Slave Trade:

The Economic Consequences of the Atlantic Slave Trade shows how the West Indian slave/sugar/plantation complex, organized on capitalist principles of private property and profit-seeking, joined the western hemisphere to the international trading system encompassing Europe, Africa, North America, and the Caribbean, and was an important determinant of the timing and pattern of the Industrial Revolution in England. The new industrial economy was no longer dependent on slavery for development, but rested instead on investment and innovation. Solow argues that abolition of the slave trade and emancipation should be understood in this context.

These papers by Barbara Solow on capitalism and slavery have radically altered our view of the whole subject of the role of the Atlantic slave trade in relation to the British Industrial Revolution and to the evolution of capitalism as a global system. They provide not only the most vigorous and successful defense of the still highly controversial Williams Thesis that we have in the literature, but go well beyond that thesis itself in placing the entire historical episode in a global context that is more extended in both space and time. (Ronald Findlay, Columbia University)The essays gathered in this volume examine the relation of slavery and capitalism over long historical time. In them Barbara Solow combines the analytical rigor of an economist and the sensitivity to social and political context of an historian. Her comprehensive temporal and geographical scope together with her uncommonly broad vision, originality, and insight deepen our understanding of old problems and provide new questions for further inquiry. They will be necessary reading for students of slavery, capitalism, and the Atlantic world. (Dale Tomich, Binghamton University)Barbara Solow is a pioneer in the study of the economics of the slave trade and of slavery itself. Her penetrating, quizzical essays on Eric Williams' view of slavery's contribution to capitalism as well as her other studies of slavery and the growth of capitalism are brought together in this volume and thus given the permanent place in the literature that they deserve. (Bernard Bailyn, Harvard University)About the AuthorBarbara L. Solow retired from the W. E. B. Du Bois Research Institute at Harvard University after having taught economics at Brandeis University and Boston University.