David Lambert presents a much-needed account of the historical development and expression of white colonial identities, exploring the political and cultural articulation of white creole identity in the British Caribbean colony of Barbados during the age of abolition (c. 1780–1833). This was the period in which the British antislavery movement emerged, to attack first the slave trade and then the institution of chattel slavery itself. Supporters of slavery in Barbados and beyond responded with their own campaigning, which resulted in a series of debates and moments of controversy that were both localised and trans-Atlantic in significance. These debates exposed tensions between Britain and its West Indian colonies, and raised questions about whether white slaveholders could be classed as fully ‘English’ and whether slavery was compatible with ‘English’ conceptions of liberty and morality. By exploring these controversies, the book considers what it meant to be a white colonial subject in a place that Barbadians saw as a vital and loyal part of the empire, and yet which was subject to increasing metropolitan attack because of the existence of slavery.

David Lambert is Lecturer in Human Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London.
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WHITE CREOLE CULTURE,
POLITICS AND IDENTITY
DURING THE AGE
OF ABOLITION

DAVID LAMBERT
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Acknowledgements

The research for this book was initially funded by a Domestic Research Scholarship, provided jointly by the University of Cambridge and Sidney Sussex College, and later by the Economic and Social Research Council (Award Number R00429924260). I thank these institutions for enabling me to realise my research. Much of the writing of this book was undertaken when I was a Research Fellow at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, between autumn 2001 and Christmas 2003. I would like to thank the Master and Fellows of the College for welcoming me and providing such a beautiful and stimulating place to work.

As to the people who have provided intellectual guidance and support, I must first thank James Duncan of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who has acted as my doctoral supervisor. I must also acknowledge the willing assistance and advice given to me by others in the Department of Geography of Cambridge University, especially Phil Howell, as well as James Blake, Stuart Corbridge, Simon Cross, Nic Higgins, Alan Ingram, Niall Johnson, Gerry Kearns, Satish Kumar and Nick Megoran. Simon Hall, a fellow traveller during research, writing and beyond, deserves a special mention. Outside Cambridge, I would like to extend thanks to Mike Heffernan, Alan Lester, Rick Mitcham, Miles Ogborn, Jenny Robinson and Charlie Withers, and to my new colleagues at Royal Holloway, University of London, especially Felix Driver. I also express my gratitude to those experts on the history of the Caribbean who provided me with advice and inspiration. They include Hilary Beckles, Marcia Burrows, Catherine Hall, Jerry Handler, Gad Heuman, Alana Johnson, Cecily Jones, Brigitte Kossek, Melanie Newton, Christer Petley, Mimi Sheller, Mary Turner, Karl Watson and Pedro Welch.

During the course of my research and writing, I have presented papers in Britain, the USA and Canada, and I am grateful for the various opportunities to speak, and for the comments and questions received at these forums. The London Group of Historical Geographers’ seminar series, the Caribbean seminar series at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and the annual conferences of the Society for Caribbean Studies have been sites of particular intellectual inspiration.
Acknowledgements

This research could not have been undertaken without the aid of many librarians and archivists in Britain, North America and the Caribbean. In particular, I thank Nicola Allen, Terry Barringer, Susan Bennett, Barbara Davis, Chris Denver, Janie Morris and Jane Robinson. In addition, I must express my gratitude to Alastair Bonnett and John Gilmore for providing me with drafts of their unfinished and unpublished work. Thanks also to Owen Tucker at Cambridge for producing the maps, and to Jenny Kynaston and Susan May at Royal Holloway for helping me with the illustrations. I would also like to thank the editorial board of the Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography, especially Alan Baker and Richard Dennis, and the staff at Cambridge University Press, notably Richard Fisher, for their help and encouragement in writing this book.

Finally, I would like to express particular gratitude to my parents, Pat and Alan, for all their financial and emotional support, and to Carolyn, for her advice, patience and encouragement, and for making it all so worthwhile. This book is dedicated to her.