

# Eric Williams Memorial Collection

# Newsletter

February 2004

## Eric Williams Memorial Collection Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

The Eric Williams Memorial Collection (EWMC) marked its fifth anniversary on March 22, 2003. It was inaugurated by current US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. During the 1998 nationally-televised ceremony, Secretary Powell heralded the contributions of Eric Williams in the battle against colonialism, among his many other achievements as a scholar, politician and international statesman. The historic event was reported in both the Caribbean and foreign media, including *The New York Times*.

The Eric Williams Memorial Collection consists of The Williams Library and Archives, comprising some 7,000 volumes, manuscripts, historical writings, correspondence (official and personal), speeches, research notes, conference documents and a miscellany of reports. It is available for consultation by researchers.

A Museum, open periodically to the general public, contains a wealth of emotive memorabilia and photographs of the period; copies of the seven translations of Williams' seminal work, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Russian, Chinese and Japanese among them); Howard University's first social sciences textbook that was compiled and edited by Williams; and numerous personal effects that speak to Williams the man, rather than the myth.

The three-dimensional replica of the late Prime Minister's private study that completes this comprehensive record is so extraordinarily realistic, it imparts to the viewer a sense of immediacy, almost of a life interrupted.

Dr. Colin Palmer, Dodge Professor of History at Princeton University, who has conducted considerable research at the EWMC, states that, "As a model for similar archival collections in the Caribbean... I remain very impressed by its breadth... [It] is a national treasure."

Along with some 65 high schools and 2,064 Trinidad and Tobago students who visited the Museum in October 2003 alone, five international schools also made the journey - from St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, Barbados, the US Virgin Islands and Chicago, US. These numbers attest to the growing renown of the EWMC and underscore its importance to the heritage of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean.

Student commentaries continue to reaffirm Frantz Fanon's admonition that,

"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it..." They reflect also the Collection's contemporary impact - ranging from 2001 Trinidad and Tobago student Alana Laura Lalman's exuberant, "One of the most insightful collections I've ever seen. Unique, compelling, wonderful," to Orlando, Florida Joshua Kirven's telling 2002 approbation, "Empowering, Riveting, Powerful"



Former Mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani, during his visit to The Eric Williams Memorial Collection Museum, November 8, 2003.

A great tribute to  
our country  
where freedom is  
without cost -  
God Bless!  
Rudolph W. Giuliani

### EWMC is 2003 APEX Award Recipient



The EWMC newsletter won the 2003 15<sup>th</sup> Annual APEX Award for Publication Excellence in the Newsletter - Printed Category.

APEX is an international competition that recognizes outstanding publications, from newsletters and magazines to annual reports, brochures and websites. As the APEX judges stated, "The awards were based on excellence in quality of editorial content, graphic design, and the success in conveying the message and achieving overall communication effectiveness."

APEX is sponsored by Communications Concepts, Inc., of Virginia, US. It attracts entries from international writers, editors, publications staff and business communicators.

Civil rights activist, Angela Davis, delivered the Fifth Annual Florida International University Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture.

See Page 7.





## Media Spotlight

### EWMC's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (March):

- *Trinidad Express* (March/June);
- *H-Net: H-Latin America*;
- *Caribbean Life* (South Florida – April);
- *Caribbean Contact* (Miami – April);
- *Newsday* (Trinidad and Tobago – April);
- *Power 102 Radio* (Trinidad and Tobago – May).

### "University" of Woodford Square – Stamp/obitograph/greeting card:

- *Caribbean Contact* (Miami – July);
- *Oliver Cromwell Cox Online Journal* – web list/home page (Miami – August);
- *Trinidad and Tobago Business Directory* – online web list (September);
- *Trinidadian* – online news (Trinidad and Tobago – September);
- *Trinidad and Tobago Consulate Newsletter* (New York – September).

### Trinidad and Tobago's 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Independence (August):

- *Newsday* – 2002 *Eric Williams Memorial Collection* Newsletter excerpt (Trinidad and Tobago – August).

### Florida International University's (FIU):

- *Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture* (Miami – September);
- *H-Net: H-Atlantic, H-Caribbean, H-Latin America: Slavery* websites – academic discussion lists (August);
- *Newsday* (Trinidad and Tobago – August);
- *Caribbean American Commentary* (Miami – August);
- *Trinidad Express* (August);
- *Broward Times* (Ft. Lauderdale – September);
- *El Nuevo Herald* (Miami – September);
- *Caribbean Contact* (Miami – September);
- *CaribSeek* – online Caribbean website (Curaçao – September);
- FIU's *Book Report* Newsletter, *Broward Newspaper, E-Newsletter* (September 8/15/23), *E-Calendar*, internet home page, *intra-university E-list* (Miami – September);
- *Channel 10, ABC TV* news (Miami – September);
- *Trinidad Guardian* (September);
- *Musik Radio, WSRF* interview (Miami – September);
- *WTFW Radio* interview (Maryland – September);

- *WVCG Radio* – Public service announcements (Miami – September);
- *Khazana*;
- *Caribbean Connection*;
- "Caribbean Kidz";
- *Hot 105 Radio* – Public service announcements (Miami – September);
- *WLRN Radio* – Public service announcements (Miami – September);
- *Radio Carnival* interview – Haitian (Miami – September);
- *The Miami Herald* – print and online editions (Miami – September 14/15/20);
- *Progress Weekly* – online Spanish news (Miami – September);
- *Haitian online web list* (Miami – September);
- *Oliver Cromwell Cox Online Journal* – web list/home page (Miami – September);
- *Trinidadian* – online news (Trinidad and Tobago – September);
- *Tallahassee Newsday* – online edition (September);
- *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* – print and online editions (Ft. Lauderdale/Palm Beach – September);
- *The Miami Times* (September 10/17/24);
- *Miami New Times* (September);
- *Saturday Edition* (Miami – September 13/27);
- *Caribbean Today* (Miami – September/October);
- *Urban American News* – online edition (Miami – October);
- *South Florida Glazer Extra* (Miami – October);
- *Ingle News* – online edition (Minneapolis – November).

### EWMC Acquisitions:

- *Newsday* (Trinidad and Tobago – September).

### EWMC Lectures:

- *Slave News* (Toronto, Canada – October);
- *WTOR Radio* interview (Toronto, Canada – October).

### EWMC Online Links:

- *FIU African-New World Studies Department*;
- *City University of New York, IRADAC*;
- *Rensselaer Educational Tours*.

## Director's Forum

Since its inauguration in 1998, *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection* has been engaged in a range of scholarly activities. A visit to the Collection's Museum has become an integral part of the itinerary of official visitors to Trinidad and Tobago. It is a regular component of annual University 'Open Days', where high-schoolers are encouraged to pursue tertiary education opportunities.

The fifth anniversary of the Collection was celebrated by the Library with a seminar, "Preserving Our Cultural Heritage: The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus Libraries and *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection*." Senior students from several secondary schools attended, including those from Queen's Royal College, Dr. Williams' alma mater. A guided tour of the EWMC Museum and a primer on the organisation and preservation of Special Collections was offered, but it was the video presentation on Dr. Williams' private life that held the students spellbound. They were equally impressed with the efforts being made to preserve the country's history and cultural heritage.

Also this year – and for the first time – the six outstanding performers in the 2003 Caribbean Examination Council, Secondary Examination Certificate were treated to a personalised tour of the EWMC Museum.

During his life and quarter-century tenure as head of government, Dr. Williams placed special emphasis on the young. As a vehicle of outreach to the community, the EWMC thus serves to inspire the nation's youth and furthers the vision Dr. Williams had for their educational and personal development.

If the following Museum commentary is representative of one student's experience, Dr. Williams' dream is very much alive even twenty-two years after his passing.

"Wow! Astonishing, man and example," *Yinghe Ryan, student, Trinidad and Tobago*

*Dr. Margaret D. Rose-Jones  
Campus Librarian*

## New Acquisitions

### Diane Dupont

A former political secretary to Eric Williams, Ms. Dupont has deposited material consisting of Williams' speeches, governmental reports and copies of *The Nation* – the newspaper of Trinidad and Tobago's first national political party founded by Williams. Her contribution constitutes an invaluable resource for research scholars. It provides a window into yesterday, and reinforces Eric Williams' own words:

*History... to inform of [the] past is an essential guide to... future action.*

### Ned Desmond Epinet

With a longtime career in the petroleum industry under his belt, Mr. Epinet is an historian by inclination, if not by profession. His consistent donations of memorabilia, of years-long standing, serve not only to complement the holdings of *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection*, but they ensure also that future generations will benefit from his largesse.





## Reference Library

# A Selection of Books

- The Negro in the Caribbean** by Eric E. Williams (1942)  
ISBN 1-8813-1668-8
  - Presents a panoramic view of the Caribbean and its population and gives meaningful perspective to its historic past. The book identifies the problems of the day and challenges the people's interpretation of their future.
- Capitalism and Slavery** by Eric E. Williams (1944). With a new Introduction by Dr. Colin Palmer.  
ISBN 0-8078-4488-8
  - Details the correlation between the slave trade and the Industrial Revolution and propounds that the former was abolished for economic and not solely humanitarian reasons. This landmark study is based on Dr. Eric Williams' doctoral dissertation.
  - Japanese Edition (2004)  
ISBN 4-7503-1845-0
- Education in the British West Indies** by Eric E. Williams (1951)  
ISBN 1-8813-1686-X
  - Represents the basic ideas outlined by Dr. Eric Williams, for higher education in the Colonies, to the sub-committee of the commission appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1945.
- History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago** by Eric E. Williams (1962)  
ISBN 1-8813-3668-8
  - Celebrates Trinidad and Tobago's Declaration of Independence on August 31, 1962, and details in full its colonial history.
- Documents of West Indian History: From the Spanish Discovery to the British Conquest of Jamaica** by Eric E. Williams (1963)  
ISBN 1-8813-1666-1
  - Corrects the deficiency where few colonials wrote their own history. The book attempts to forge the cultural integration of the Caribbean with its "common heritage of subordination to and dictation by outside interests."
- British Historians and the West Indies** by Eric E. Williams (1966)  
ISBN 1-8813-1666-5
  - Focuses on the Jamaican Rebellion of 1865. This book examines British writers and "British attitudes to West Indian history... shows that many assumptions are false and that much historical objectivity is no more than barely disguised prejudice."
- From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1962** by Eric E. Williams (1970)  
ISBN 0-3947-1502-0
  - Details the history of the entire Caribbean and its peoples, separated by the language and culture of their colonizers. The book defines "a profoundly important but neglected and misrepresented area of the world."
  - Japanese Edition (2000), Vols. I and II  
ISBN 4-00-026538-5  
ISBN 4-00-026539-3
- The Economic Future of the Caribbean** Edited by Eric E. Williams and E. Franklin Frazier (2004)  
ISBN 0-912469-37-4
  - Papers from a 1943 Howard University Conference organized by Williams, bringing together an eclectic and influential group of experts to debate its theme. Speakers included advocates of independence, Caribbean-American pro-democracy movement leaders, scholars, diplomats and high-level bureaucrats of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission.
- British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams** Edited by Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman (1987)  
ISBN 0-5213-5478-0 (cloth)  
ISBN 0-5215-3320-1 (paper)
  - Emanates from the 1984 Bellagio, Italy, Conference on Eric Williams, co-sponsored by Boston University and the Rockefeller Conference and Study Center.
- Eric E. Williams Speaks: Essays on Colonialism and Independence** Edited by Selwyn R. Cudjoe (1993)  
ISBN 0-8702-3888-4 (paper)  
ISBN 0-8702-3887-6 (cloth)
  - Reproduces Dr. Eric Williams' most important political writings and underscores his use of language to add to the emotional power of his political analyses and arguments.
- Callaloo**, Vol. 20, No. 4, University of Virginia/Johns Hopkins Journal (1998)  
ISSN 0-1612-492
  - Features - for the first time ever - an entire issue on a political writer, Dr. Eric Williams. This scholarly African American Journal of arts and letters debuted in 1976.
- Caribbean Issues**, Vol. VIII, Nos. 1 & 2  
UWI Journal (1998/1999)  
ISSN 1-8276-363
  - Papers from the 1996 UWI/Harvard University co-sponsored Conference on Eric Williams.
- Capitalism & Slavery: Fifty Years Later - Eric E. Williams - A Reassessment of The Man & His Work** Edited by Heather Cassan and S. H. H. Carrington (2000)  
ISBN 0-8204-4171-6
  - Re-examines Dr. Williams' work, revisits his major opus, *Capitalism and Slavery* and embraces new developments and trends in the historiography.
- The Elusive Eric Williams** by Ken Woodson (2002)  
ISBN 976-637-050-8  
ISBN 976-95057-1-4
  - Based on interviews commissioned exclusively for the purpose of establishing an *Eric Williams Memorial Collection Oral History Project*, the book purports to put a private face on the public persona of Williams, a man of great complexity - in the writer's view "obsessive secrecy" - and baffling contradictions.



## Research Reports

### They "Could Never Have Too Much of My Work":

Eric Williams and *The Journal of Negro History*, 1940-1945

by Professor David Barry Gaspar

Adapted from *The Journal of African American History*

Vol. 88, No. 3, Summer 2003

On 7<sup>th</sup> August 1939, Trinidad and Tobago-born Eric Easton Williams – a man who would rise to great prominence as scholar, politician and Caribbean leader – was just a few days short of his twenty-eighth birthday. Fresh from magnificent academic triumphs at Oxford University where his doctoral dissertation, "The Economic Aspect of the Abolition of the West Indian Slave Trade and Slavery," would literally turn the historical interpretation of British abolition on its head, he arrived in the US to take up an appointment as Assistant Professor of Social and Political Science at Howard University in Washington, DC – referred to by some as the "Negro Oxford."

Howard University in 1939 was the leading Black institution of higher learning in the US. As such, Williams embraced the opportunity to work among an impressive group of scholars such as Ralph J. Bunche and Alain Locke. One eminent and influential black American who was not on Howard's faculty, however, but whose work would serve Williams well, was Carter Godwin Woodson, "the second black American (after W.E.B. Du Bois) to receive a doctorate in history" at Harvard University. In the fall and winter of 1915-16, Woodson founded *The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History* and launched *The Journal of Negro History (JNH)*, to build Black pride and to erode prejudice by working toward the alleviation of the deplorable political, social and economic circumstances of Africans and African Americans.

At Oxford University, Williams was already familiar with the *JNH* and its promotion of the work of Black American scholars and, therefore, recognised that there was a welcome convergence between his overall intellectual, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist outlook and that of Woodson's, which was forcefully and purposefully represented in the objectives and content of the *Journal*. Their approaches may have differed, but in that sense, both Williams and Woodson were scholar activists working toward similar goals. Williams quickly seized the opportunity to make his work available for publication via that medium, which was then considered to be the leading Black scholarly journal in the US. Since two of his articles appeared before the release of his 1944 seminal work, *Capitalism and Slavery* – an expansion of his university thesis – he used the first to emphasize the book's major themes about the decisive role played by the slave trade in the development of the overall slave system, the growth of British capitalism, and the evolution of its brand of colonialism linked to Black slavery.

This paper, *The Golden Age of the Slave System in Britain*, got Williams off to an auspicious start. He was awarded the first prize of \$100 for the most outstanding article contributed that year. In general, many questions raised here are later addressed in detail in *Capitalism and Slavery*. Williams' interest in the slave trade was thus part of a larger intellectual concern or agenda of macroeconomic and political significance. Much work remains to be done to pursue his insights in several contexts, in spite of all the illuminating scholarship that has been published about the Atlantic Slave Trade in recent years. It may be useful, therefore, to consult this article and Williams' doctoral thesis before tackling *Capitalism and Slavery*, because such an approach provides an opportunity to trace the development of the ideas and the intellectual and conceptual trajectory that shaped this famous book.

In his second *JNH* article that appeared in 1942, the same year that his highly-regarded book *The Negro in the Caribbean* was published, Williams returned to a discussion of slave trading. The article dealt with *The British West Indian Slave Trade After Its Abolition in 1807*. Covering the period 1807-1833, from abolition to formal general emancipation of the slaves in the British colonies, Williams showed that the abuse of regulations after abolition – that allowed the transfer of slaves from one territory to another under certain conditions – spawned what amounted to a renewed trade in slaves. His discussion of these developments related to the 'inter-colonial slave trade' emphasized the potency of economic forces in support of slavery, in the face of a growing campaign in Britain to reform, if not to abolish it, altogether.

The third article published by Williams in the *JNH* appeared in 1945, *The Historical Background of British Guiana's Problems*. In this, he moved beyond a focused consideration of predominantly historical issues to examine the highly problematic prospects of one Caribbean territory (British Guiana) whose legacy was a past shaped by slavery and colonialism. His main objective was to use one colony to represent the plight of the British Caribbean colonies and the wider region as a whole. Williams combined perspectives about the past, present, and future of those colonies as seen through the difficulties of British Guiana. He concluded that, "It was the addition of monopoly and not of slavery, it was free trade and not free labour that 'ruined' British Guiana and the British West Indies."





## Research Reports

The three *JNH* articles appeared during a period of extraordinary scholarly productivity and other intellectual activity in the early stages of the career of the young Williams, who was stimulated by the intellectual and political climate in and around Howard University in the pre-war-time US. According to Williams, "I was living with the New Deal and the appraisal of America's resources just before it became the arsenal of democracy. I was at the very centre of dollar diplomacy and intervention by the Marines before the inauguration of the good neighbour policy...Garveyism had left its mark on the American Negro. National Socialism and Fascism had their votaries in America, as in Britain. The Third International, with its collectivisation and five-year plans, its liquidation of 'kulaks' and its purges, its world revolution and its statistics on the class front, was beginning to agitate American conservatism. Civil war in Spain and civil disobedience in India, nationalisation in Mexico and national resistance in Ethiopia - the world was headed for World War II, American supremacy and the emergence of the colonial peoples." Such was the political and intellectual climate in the US and internationally that helped to galvanize Williams' sense of purpose.

Ultimately, the intellectual dynamism that Williams brought to his work in the US is amply reflected in his publication record, with the *JNH* being just one beneficiary of his efforts. Between the period 1940-1947, Williams contributed fifteen scholarly papers to prestigious publications, among them: *The Journal of Negro Education*, *Time*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Foreign Affairs*, *American Perspectives*, *Survey Graphic*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Phylon*. He also compiled and edited two books, including Howard University's first ever social sciences textbook (three volumes), and published his own polemic, *The Negro in the Caribbean*.

In all of Williams' work, his intellectual objectives were more than purely academic. His cast of mind was more broadly political, moving in an anti-imperialist and anti-racist direction. His articles in the *JNH* were written with a clear sense of academic and political purpose: to draw attention to the Caribbean for a better understanding of the global plight of people of African descent, whose historical roots in the Atlantic Slave Trade, colonization, and slavery were of special interest to Williams.

Although Williams did not publish anything else in the *Journal* after 1945, when *Capitalism and Slavery* was finally released in 1944, it was promptly reviewed in the *JNH*. "This book marks," Woodson declared, "the beginning of the scientific study of slavery from the international point of view and shows the necessity for [its] definitive study in all parts of the New World." Writing in 1945 about contemporary preeminent

historians of African descent, Woodson cites Williams who, he noted proudly, "has come into prominence as one of the best historians of his day without regard to race. His articles on the British Empire in relation to the West Indies and his recent work on capitalism and slavery," Woodson added, "advances him to the front rank in modern historiography."

*David Barry Gaspar is Professor of History,  
Duke University, US*

## Visitors of Note

2003

- January** Paul Greenough, University of Iowa, US  
Jiangning Yang, student, China
- February** Luis Carras Rivera, Universidad Central de Venezuela  
Nani and George Lenney Javer, Spain  
Maria Valentin Abreu, Embassy of Venezuela  
Ari Rosenberg, Bates College, Maine, US  
Yeongi Ginty Yang, South Korea
- April** Allan Lifshitz, Vice-Chairman, University of Suriname
- May** Spiro Kooptan, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Netherlands  
Marcia Rosens, IFLA, Brazil  
Abdelaziz Abid, UNESCO, Memory of the World, France  
Richard Blackem, President, Association of Caribbean Historians, Vassar College, US
- June** Joyce Williams-Green, Wisconsin-Salem State University, US  
Carlos Daniel Acosta, Universidad Nacional de Colombia  
Maurice St. Pierre, Morgan State University, US
- July** Hector C. Butts, South Carolina State University, US  
James Millene, Oberlin College, US  
Mark L. Groves, Brigham Young University, US
- October** Vinodra Gupta, High Commissioner of India
- November** Dr. Stephanie Daverport, Double Museum of African American History, Chicago, US  
Ambassador of Norway  
Brenda Armstrong, Wesley College, Belize  
Oscar Jaramilla, Universidad Javeriana, Colombia
- December** Jessie G. Webster, Anguilla  
Humberto Garcia-Mullis, University of Puerto Rico  
Daniel Ram, Guyana  
Neville Jordan, Scotland



## Highlights

# Accomplishments

### Eric Williams Websites

Researchers and individuals worldwide continue to make active use of the Eric E. Williams website (<http://palm.m.fcla.edu/eww/>) maintained by the University of Florida. Considering the relatively few number of items currently available, this site attracts substantially more visitors even than some of the University's larger collections. Work is on-going to ensure greater access to both titles and citations; to digitise newspaper articles relating to Eric Williams; and to institute technology that will support image-related displays such as stamps and photographs.

New titles available on this website, for a total of eight:

- *The British West Indies at Westminster, 1789-1823* – Extracts from the debates in Parliament
- *Documents on British West Indian History, 1807-1833* – Select documents
- *'Mau' Day Done* – A masterpiece of political and sociological analysis

Utilising images from its Eric Williams home page as well as that of its other digital collections, the University of Florida distributed colour calendars to various of its supporters, fundraising contacts and Florida university administrators.

The EWMC website ([www.mainlib.uwi.tt/eric.html](http://www.mainlib.uwi.tt/eric.html)), maintained by the University of the West Indies, continues to feature current news and activities. Plans are underway to include a virtual tour of the EWMC Museum.

✽

News about *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection* and its activities is disseminated to a majority of US colleges and universities with an African Studies programme; individuals and corporations in Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean, US,

UK and Europe; international broadcast, print, cyber media and online academic lists – among these the Caribbean Cultural Center, World Slave History, and H-Net; to the following Associations/organisations: Caribbean Historians; French Black Studies; Collegium for African American Research (Europe); Third World Studies; Modgar Evers Caribbean Research Center; Mexican Caribbean Studies; Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars; African Diaspora (New York University); *Groupe de Recherches en Littérature de L'Amérique Noire*; French West Indies; Japan Black Studies; Black and Asian Studies (UK); Middle States; Yale University's Lehman Center; and to the Institute of Latin American Studies, Beijing, China.

✽

Eric Williams has been included for the last several years in the *365 Days of Black History Calendar* sold at Barnes & Noble, Dalton's, Borders, and other major US book store chains.

✽

Williams' contributions to Trinidad and Tobago and to African America have also been incorporated in the draft "Social Studies Lesson Plans for Grades 3, 10 and 11" of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System. The material is currently being reviewed and will be initiated for the 2005-2006 school year.

### March

*The Eric Williams Memorial Collection's* fifth anniversary press release was inserted in the annual newsletter mailing of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Black and Asian Studies Association (UK). It was sent to more than two hundred individuals, organisations and universities in the UK, US, Mexico, Japan, and the Caribbean. The Newsletter is also available for sale in Black bookstores in the UK.

### Lectures on Eric Williams and *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection* –

#### Eric Williams Council:

March	Florida Memorial College (Honors) Class – Faculty and Provost attending.
May	Florida International University and the Broward County African-American Research Library & Cultural Center's "State of Black Studies Conference." Panel: <i>Archiving Black Culture</i>
September	Florida International University Graduate Class. Course: <i>Caribbean Thought and Development</i>
October	PNM (People's National Movement)/UNC (United National Congress) group, Toronto, Canada.



*Capitalism and Slavery*  
Japanese Edition (2004)





## Highlights

### FIU's Fifth Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture Attracts Huge Audience

Celebrated civil rights activist Angela Davis, Professor in History of Consciousness and Chair of Women's Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, was the keynote speaker at the Fifth Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture held at Florida International University (FIU), Miami in September.

As part of the African-New World Studies Distinguished Africana Scholars Lecture Series, Dr. Davis' lecture, *Slavery and the Prison Industrial Complex*, was enthusiastically received by some one thousand attendees. It is estimated that another one thousand-strong were unable to be accommodated. This event was the largest draw ever for the FIU Lecture Series.

Dr. Davis' down-to-earth and folksy tone was engaging as she lambasted the US penal system, suggesting that, as an exportable and now privatised industrial complex, it served to ensure a form of present-day slavery. Citing the disproportionately higher incarceration rate for people of colour, she recalled slavery's history – where there existed some sixty-six offenses for which a black man could be put to death, as opposed to only one for whites. Davis noted that poorly-performing schools in America today provide a conduit to adult imprisonment, with a predictable stop along the way in juvenile hall. Hence, effective education is the key to reducing not only the ever-growing prison population, but it also remains the only means whereby racism, still deeply embedded in the system, can be uprooted and eradicated.

The Lecture concluded with a lively and informative 'Question and Answer' session where current and controversial topics such as the USA Patriot Act, its limits on civil rights, and its suspected target of minorities, were amplified. The war in Iraq was also addressed. It drew spirited criticism for its exorbitant cost – both in human and financial terms – and a discussion of more appropriate utilisation of these monies, given domestic US challenges.

Following her speech, Dr. Davis was presented with two *Mayoral Proclamations* by Commissioners Arthur Teele and Betty Ferguson of the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County respectively. She also accepted a *Distinguished Visitor Certificate* from Florida Senator, Frederica Wilson.

Congratulatory letters to lecture organisers were also acknowledged from the podium: from Florida Governor Jeb Bush; US Senators (Florida) Bob Graham and Bill Nelson; and Miami-Dade County Commissioner Katy Sorenson.

The numerous faculty and students present came from Christopher Columbus High School Honor Society; Florida

Memorial College; Miami-Dade College Honors Class; and FIU's African-New World Studies and History Departments. Credit was offered to those students attending from the University of Miami (English Department) and from Florida Atlantic University (Women's Studies Department). A "Who's Who" of international guests and diplomatic corps members added to the lustre of this historic occasion:

- From Trinidad and Tobago – the Hon. Ken Valley, Minister of Trade; Miami Consul General, Dr. Harold Robertson; and Professor and Mrs. Gurmohan Kochhar, Deputy Principal, University of the West Indies (Trinidad and Tobago campus).
- From Jamaica – Courtenay Rattray, Chargé d'Affaires, Washington, DC Embassy; Consul General Ricardo Allicock, Marcia Coore-Laban, Deputy Consul General, and Vance Carret, Vice Consul (Miami).
- From Barbados – Hon. Dr. Jerome Walcott, Minister of Health; Consul General Ben Martinez, Joyce Bourne, Deputy Consul General, Urban Camberbatch, Consul (Miami); Mr. Samuel Chandler, Permanent Secretary, Ministry Foreign Affairs; Dr. Joy St. John, Senior Medical Health Officer; Professor Hilary Beckles, Principal/Pro-Vice Chancellors, University of the West Indies, (Barbados campus).

The Lecture garnered significant local and international media coverage, with journalists from New York and Minnesota attending on behalf of Jamaica's *Weekly Gleaner*.



The 8<sup>th</sup> International and Interdisciplinary Conference of the Society for Caribbean Research, University of Antwerp, Belgium, hosted a meeting entitled, *Injustice and Insubordination: The Caribbean Writer as Warrior of the Imaginary*. Dr. Colin Palmer, Princeton University, presented his paper on *Eric Williams and the Anti-Colonial Struggle*, which is based on a study of Williams' published works and speeches. Palmer's exposé shows Williams as unrelenting in his assault on the historical roots and systemic expressions of colonialism. To Dr. Williams, these were primarily responsible for the major problems confronted by the Caribbean. The paper focuses on how Williams' anti-colonial stance shaped his performance as Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, with Palmer dwelling particularly on Williams' conflict with the United States over Chaguaramas – an area of the country leased to it by Britain during World War II. His outright rejection of Britain's initial paltry economic aid on the occasion of his nation's Independence is also a theme, leading the then British authority to question Williams' sanity as the only post-colonial leader to do so.





## Highlights

*The Journal of African American History*, Vol. 88, No. 3, edited by V.E. Franklin, Columbia University, features three papers on Dr. Eric Williams which were presented at the October 2002 *Association for the Study of African American Life and History* conference in Orlando, Florida.



- *Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission: Trinidad's Future Nationalist Leader as Imperial Bureaucrat, 1942-1944* (Tony Martin, Wellesley College);
- *They Could Never Have Too Much of My Work: Eric Williams and The Journal of Negro History, 1940-1945* (David Barry Gaspar, Duke University);
- *Capitalism & Slavery and Caribbean Historiography: An Evaluation* (Selwyn H. H. Carrington, Howard University).

This trio of writings reflects Williams' scholarly output, mindset, and activism. Complemented by an Introduction, they offer compelling reading as they place Eric Williams squarely within the pantheon of African American notables, albeit hailing from the West Indies.

Martin's essay vividly captures the high-powered circles in which Williams traveled in the 1940's. It paints a picture of him as both scholar and activist who tenaciously clung to his Caribbean roots, while being driven to advance his knowledge and research in order to articulate the aspirations of his people. David Barry Gaspar's work characterises Williams' relationship in the 1940's with Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of *The Journal of Negro History* (see Page 4), while Carrington's monograph describes how, some sixty years later, it is still Williams' ground-breaking work *Capitalism and Slavery* that continues to inform the current debate on the Atlantic Slave Trade.

## EWMC School Visits

*"...you carry the future of Trinidad and Tobago in your school bags."*

*Eric Eustace Williams*

### TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Anjuman Sarnam Jumar Association Girls College,  
Charleville

Arma Government Secondary

Atlantic Education & Sports Institute

Belmore Junior Secondary

Bishop Anson's High, East

Bishop's Centenary College

Builer Henri Laboua College

Carapichaima Senior Comprehensive

Cedera Composite

Chaguarama Senior Composite

CIC

Croyal High

Crown Hamilton Secondary

Dabe High

Diago Martin Government Secondary

El Dorado Secondary Comprehensive

Fatima College

Five Rivers Junior Secondary

Fyabad Composite

Gasparillo Composite

Hillview College

Holy Cross College

Holy Faith Convent, Prind

Lalabani Girls Hindu College

Malahar Composite

Malkh Senior Comprehensive

Mayaro Composite

Moruga Composite

Morvant-Laventille Senior Secondary

Naparima College

NIBERST Youth Group

Northwestern College

Northgate College

Pleasantville Senior Comprehensive

Polysthatic

Prezention College, Chaguarama

and San Fernando

Princes Town Senior Comprehensive

Queen's Royal College

Rio Claro College

San Juan Government Secondary

San Fernando Technical Institute

Sanger Grande Junior Secondary

Shiva Boys Hindu College

Signal Hill Comprehensive, Tobago

Sparia Junior Secondary

Southeast Port of Spain Government Secondary

Southern Community College

St. Augustine Senior Secondary

Comprehensive

St. Dominic's Convent

St. Francis Girls College

St. George's Academy, San Fernando

St. Joseph's College

St. Joseph's Convent, San Fernando,

St. Joseph, Arima and San Juan

St. Martin's Girls High

St. Mary's College

Tabaquite Composite

Tranquillity Government Secondary

Trinity College, East

Tunapuna Government Secondary

Tunapuna Junior Secondary

UWI School of Continuing Studies

Valesia High

### INTERNATIONAL

Chicago Trinity United Church of Christ

People's Cathedral School of Barbados





## Highlights

### On the Horizon

- *Policy, Politics and Promise in Calypso: The Eric Williams Era* is the title of a proposed panel at the *Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination Conference*, scheduled for March 2005 at the University of Miami. It is likely that no single individual – other than Eric Williams – has been so immortalised in the art form. More than 150 calypsos feature trenchant social commentary on both his policies and persona. This Symposium will provide an opportunity not only to showcase the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, but also to analyse the contribution calypso has made to the fabric of the two-island nation. Panel Chair is Bill Aho, retired professor, Rhode Island College. Presenters are Judge Ray Funk, sitting judge and calypographer; Dr. Lewis Regis, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago campus; and Dr. Hollis Liverpool, University of the Virgin Islands. Dr. Liverpool, known to many as "Chalkdust," is a famous calypsonian who enjoyed an uneasy relationship with Eric Williams when several of his renditions were deemed to be critical of the administration.

✽

- Eric Williams' *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969* will be reprinted in the UK by Andre Deutsch/Carlton Books Publishers. The previous edition was issued in 1997. The first Spanish version is being translated and will be published in 2005 by *El Instituto Meso* and the Mexican Association of Caribbean Studies. It will feature a new Introduction by Professor Humberto García-Muñiz of the Institute of Caribbean Studies at the University of Puerto Rico.

✽

- Dr. Colin Palmer, Princeton University, has completed his biography of Eric Williams up to the year 1970, entitled *Eric Williams and the Making of the Modern Caribbean*. It is based on a substantial number of manuscript sources in *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection*, the US National Archives, and the UK Public Records Office.

Dr. Palmer's book, in part biography, intellectual history, and political history, examines Williams' central role in the construction of the modern Caribbean. Detailing previously unexplored topics and insights, it analyses his vision for the political and economic integration of the region, the Chaguaramas struggle, his attempts to mediate the inter-racial racial disputes in British Guiana, the *imbroglio* with the United Kingdom over the "Golden Handshake" (the parting independence gift), and unitary statehood with Grenada.

The book will be published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2005. It is no coincidence that this is the same Press that afforded Williams his own opportunity in 1944 with the publication of his landmark study, *Capitalism and Slavery*. At that time, the leading British publisher of revolutionary works (who would later go on to publish all of Trotsky's and Stalin's) refused, citing its "too radical nature." A promotional lecture tour is planned with New York, Miami, Toronto and London as possible venues.

- *The Eric Williams Memorial Collection* has continued its sale of *The "University" of Woodford Square* cards and 16" x 24" prints to benefit the Collection, thanks to the generosity of Quornall Industries (Trinidad & Tobago) which made available its extensive database for solicitation purposes. The card was also highlighted on the *Oliver Cromwell Car Online Institute's* web page, generating more site visits than any other incorporated links. These two items are reproductions of a painting by distinguished local artist, Adrian Carpo-Carpina.



*The "University" of Woodford Square*

To purchase, please contact: [ewc.williams@juno.com](mailto:ewc.williams@juno.com) or call (305) 271-7246.

✽

- Efforts are underway to reprint or republish the following book titles by or about Eric Williams:
  - *Eric E. Williams Speaks* – Selwyn Cudjoe, University of Massachusetts Press.
  - *Callaloo: Eric Williams and the Postcolonial Caribbean*, Vol. 20, No. 4 – Johns Hopkins University Press/Texas A & M University.
  - *Capitalism and Slavery* – Spanish. Prior two editions were published in Argentina (1973) and in Cuba (1975).
  - *Capitalism and Slavery* – German. Never before translated.
  - *Capitalism and Slavery* – Chinese. Prior edition 1972.
  - *Capitalism and Slavery* – Portuguese. Prior edition 1975.
  - *Capitalism and Slavery* – Russian. Prior edition 1950.
  - *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969* – Chinese. Prior edition 1976.

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## History Revisited

### Back in Time...

#### The Late Prime Minister Dr. Eric Williams and SERVOL.

by Fr. General Parris, Chairman, SERVOL.

*Adapted from the SERVOL News, May 1981*

*"...build the nation of Trinidad and Tobago, bringing in all the races, acknowledging all their contributions; elevating lowly castes, dignifying despised colours, achieving a synthesis here and a new autonomy there, raising up the past and the lowly and giving them a positive role in our society...  
The humblest antecedents are not inconsistent with greatness of soul."*

*Eric Eustace Williams*

I heard the news in London, UK, on Monday, March 30, 1981 at 3:00 p.m. "...Eric Williams is dead" I sat there trying to marshal my thoughts and a flood of memories swept through my mind. I was back in East Dry River, Trinidad and Tobago, in November 1970 – six months after a national crisis had erupted combining three essential forces: months of thousands of marching angry black youth, disenchanted with the pace of change and identifying with their metropolitan compatriots in their demand for "Black Power"; a political cadre of disparate groups taking advantage of the deteriorating situation; and an attempted military coup to overthrow the democratically-elected government of Eric Williams.

I had approached a group of young men loitering on a street corner in what was one of the most depressed areas in the capital and was trying, futilely, to convince this hostile audience that I wanted to help them. One of them laughed sarcastically, challenging, "You say you want to help? Then get us an appointment with the Prime Minister."

I turned away in despair. What chance did I have of fulfilling their wish? I had never even met the man! Then came one of those extraordinary happenings, coincidences, gifts from God, call it what you will – as I returned to the office of our newly-formed SERVOL organisation, an associate said, "We just got a call from Whitehall. The Prime Minister wants to see us tomorrow morning."

The following day saw SERVOL members and myself explaining to Dr.

Williams what we were attempting to accomplish in the area, and the problems we faced in teaching youngsters skills that would not only enable them to gain employment, but would also literally rebuild their characters, would repair the environmental damage life had wrought in their hearts, souls and minds.

Dr. Williams spoke to us in words I can remember clearly even after all these years. "I think what you are doing is good. I do not want to associate myself with your work, as people would interpret it as a political scheme. However, if at any time you have any reasonable request to make of the Government, do not hesitate to do so through the normal channels." I summoned up my courage, it was now or never. "Dr. Williams, there is a group from the Quarry Street area that wants to see you." He turned to his secretary, "Make an appointment for them at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow," and we were ushered out.

When I hurried back with my success, the boys couldn't believe it! The following morning eight of us piled into an ancient Vauxhall 101 and drove to Whitehall. When the military guard saw us approaching, they cocked their subloading rifles – it could well have been the start of another "Black Power" march, for we did appear formidable.

We were shown into a conference room and soon Dr. Williams entered, shaking hands with everyone. The group explained that they wanted to start a bakery and had even identified a location. The Prime Minister surveyed them grimly: "I understand the site you

have in mind was the former PNM Party (the political organisation founded by Williams) headquarters that you burnt down during the rioting." Consternation sweeps over the group; it wasn't them, it was another group from Observatory Street lower down, or maybe the gang from St. John's Road, but definitely not them. A flicker of a smile, and Dr. Williams speaks again. "That is past history now. I am prepared to recommend to the Industrial Development Corporation that you be granted a loan of \$50,000 to build and equip your bakery, provided you raise \$5,000 of your own to start the project. Good day gentlemen, and good luck."

I met him twice after that – once when the group returned to inform him that they had raised the \$5,000 and again when he formally opened the bakery in early 1972.

As SERVOL grew by leaps and bounds over the years, I had ample time to analyse and reflect on the Prime Minister's attitude to it and to community development in general, and as I compared notes with colleagues in Malaysia, India, Australia, Singapore, Zimbabwe and Latin America, I realised that the theory he had propounded in an existential situation could not be improved upon.

First, Government should never take active part in the work of a voluntary organisation involved in community development. Its function is to create the proper climate, the appropriate atmosphere in which an organisation such as SERVOL can flourish. But how does a Government, from the thousands





## History Revisited

of requests it receives for financial assistance, distinguish between genuine practitioners and fly-by-night operators? Simply, it demands that the people concerned demonstrate their initiative, their courage and their ability by taking the first step – raising the first \$5,000. If they cannot do this, it is doubtful they can sustain a larger project.

Concurrently, Government should monitor the development of the organisation in question, to decide whether further help should be given: do the goals of the group coincide with the national development plans? Are they performing a vital service? Is it engaged in experimental and innovative work? Is it raising most of its own funds, only seeking Government support when the need is greatest?

We were not to meet again, but subsequent events proved that Dr. Williams never wavered from this policy. In December 1970, he was present at SERVOL's first annual Poor Man's Christmas Dinner through which we have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years. In February 1971, I requested that the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Force provide SERVOL with both soldiers and sailors to be trained specifically in community work. Though I was told nothing of who approved this appeal, there was no way such a novel solicitation could have been granted without the acquiescence of the Prime Minister.

When, in 1977, funding for the salaries of SERVOL's nursery school teachers expired, the Government picked up the tab. In 1978, our flagship Life Skills Centre was built and equipped at a total cost of \$920,000 (TT dollars), leaving SERVOL with a \$300,000 debt. Government paid it. In 1980, substantial local and foreign donations allowed for the construction of a similar industrial training centre in another region of the

country. When runaway inflation resulted in a significant shortfall, the Government, once again, came through. By 1981, Trinidad and Tobago's per capita income had disqualified SERVOL from receiving the foreign grants that were its life support – the Government stepped in and afforded ongoing assistance for operational expenses.

By that time, of course, Dr. Williams was deceased but his legacy remained to drive many of the policies of the successor administration.

All these thoughts flashed through my mind that cold Monday afternoon in London. The following day, I asked the distinguished international gathering at a conference I was attending to stand in silence as a mark of respect for our late Prime Minister. And I was moved to wonder: had anyone ever succeeded in delving beneath the air of competence, power and self-assurance of this extraordinary man? Had anyone tried to heal the scars that remained from a childhood marred by the subtle violence of racism, colonial arrogance and by the despair and anger born from seeing

mediocre minds placed above his? How does one explain this man's extraordinary sensitivity and humanity in certain conditions and his equally extraordinary intransigence in others?

All we, in SERVOL, can do is pledge ourselves to the task of healing the inner selves of the boys and girls who come to us. Who knows, among them there may be a future prime minister. And if we are faithful to this trust, then Eric Eustace Williams can rest in peace.

*SERVOL is a non-governmental organisation headquartered in Trinidad and Tobago. It aims to empower local communities and works with disadvantaged children and their parents in hundreds of centres nationwide. Its educational model has been adapted by projects in the Caribbean, South Africa and the Republic of Ireland.*

*In 1994, Fr. Gerard Pantin and SERVOL were the recipients of the Swedish Rights Livelihood Foundation's Alternative Nobel Prize. The Award, presented at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament, exists to strengthen the positive social forces that its awardees represent, and to provide the support and inspiration needed to make them a model for the future.*

## Scholarships and Prizes

### The Eric Williams Memorial Scholarship

2003: RADICA MAHAJE

This scholarship is valid for two years (M.Phil.) or three (Ph.D.). Applicants must be CARICOM nationals with university degrees (at least Upper Second Class or its equivalent) in history, economics or political science. The candidate will be required to pursue full-time studies for the M.Phil. or Ph.D. degree at UWI, Trinidad and Tobago.

Research topics: Caribbean History, Caribbean Economic Development, Caribbean Politics. Scholarship value: US \$6,000 (approx.). To apply, write: Assistant Registrar, Postgraduate Section, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Closing Date: May 1, 2005.

### The Eric Williams Prize for History

Department of History, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago, annual award.

Genre: *Capitalism and Slavery*

2003: NAETTE YORD LEE

Genre: *Imperialism, 1763-1918; Imperialism Since 1914*

2003: JULIAN PHILLIPS



## Of Interest

- Organisation of American States Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi publicly recalled Eric Williams' enduring legacy at a week-long celebration in Washington, DC, to honour Trinidad and Tobago's forty-first anniversary of Independence on August 31, 2003. Referring to Williams' vision for national unity, Caribbean integration, and the accomplishments to date, Mr. Einaudi concluded, "If he could be with us, Dr. Williams would feel his work was not done in vain."
- An April 2003 House Convention was held in Trinidad and Tobago to promote the values of community and public service to the nation's youth. In the *Plenar* category, the National Gas Company pointed to Eric Williams as the architect of the country's current economic prosperity. Trinidad and Tobago is now the world's leading exporter of methanol and nitrogenous fertilisers. Thus, its 1997 *Nu! Nu! Zina* economic message, "A Tiger In A Sea Of Peace Gas," is still reflective of the country's global reach. Photos that inspired Williams' legendary exhortation to the children of Trinidad and Tobago were also distributed to the approximately 5000 attendees.



The National Gas Company  
Proud of Eric Williams

### Museum Commentary

"Humbling & important."  
*C. J. Lester*  
Oxford University, UK

"An inspiring experience. Propels one to soar to highest high."  
*Sophia Almonisi*  
Academy, Trinidad and Tobago

### Passing the Torch...

Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* is required reading in many US academic institutions, among them:

Albany College	Duke University	New York University	Sacramento College	University of Pennsylvania
American University	Eastern Michigan University	Ohio State University	Syracuse University	University of Rochester
Antioch College	Emory University	Oregon State University	Tulsa University	University of South Florida
Arizona State University West	Florida International University	Ohio State University, New York	University of Akron	University of Vermont
Biomedical University	Florida State University	Pennsylvania State University	University of California, Berkeley/Orvis	University of Virginia
Boston College	Gonzaga University	Philadelphia College	Simon Barbra	University of Washington
Bowling Green State University	Harvard University	Princeton University	University of Georgia	University of Wisconsin
Brown University	Haverford College	Rice University	University of Houston	Villanova University
Catholic University of America	Illinois Institute of Technology	Rutgers University	University of Illinois	Virginia Commonwealth University
College of Saint Rose	Johns Hopkins University	Stamton College	University of Iowa	Wake Forest University
Columbia College, Chicago	Loyola Marymount University	Southern Illinois University	University of Maine	Wellesley College
Columbia University	Madison College	Stanford University	University of Miami	Wesleyan University
Cornell University	Metropolitan State College, Denver	State University of New York, Binghamton/Brockport	University of Minnesota	Western New England College
Dartmouth College	New School			Whitman College
DePaul University				

**"Until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt will continue to be about the hunter"**  
*African Proverb*

The Eric Williams Memorial Collection's annual Newsletter has been made possible through the generosity of the Unit Trust Corporation of Trinidad & Tobago. Edited by Helen Keri Smith and Erica Williams Connell, it is intended to highlight the activities of the Collection, to promote intellectual research and investigation, and to assist in fulfilling the EWMC's mission statement: *Historia Exemplum Proposuit (History Provides the Blueprint)*

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Monday to Friday, 8:30a.m. - 4:00p.m.

#### WEBSITE

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