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.

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

See Page 7...
EWMC’s 5th 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/lithograph/greeting card:
- Caribbean Contact (Miami – July);
- Oliver Cromwell Cox Online Institute – web list/home page (Miami – August);
- Trinidad and Tobago Business Directory – online web list (September);
- Trinidadia – online news (Trinidad and Tobago – September);
- Trinidadia and Tobago Consultant Newsletter (New York – September).

Trinidad and Tobago’s 41st 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);
- CaribSeek – online Caribbean website (Curaçao – September);
- FIU’s Book Report Newsletter, Beacon Newspaper, E-Newsletter (September 8/15/23), E-Calendar, internet home page, intra-university E-lists (Miami – September);
- Channel 10, ABC TV news (Miami – September);
- Trinidad Guardian (September);
- Mystik Radio, WSRF interview (Miami – September);
- WPFW Radio interview (Maryland – September).

Media Spotlight

EWMC’s 5th Anniversary (March):
- WVCG Radio – Public service announcements (Miami – September);
- Khazana
- Caribbean Connection
- “Caribbean Ridims”;
- 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 1/19/20);
- Progress Weekly – online Spanish news (Miami – September);
- Haitian online web list (Miami – September);
- Oliver Cromwell Cox Online Institute – web list/home page (Miami – September);
- Trinidadia – online news (Trinidad and Tobago – September);
- Tallahassee Newswire – 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 Gleaner Extra (Miami – October);
- Insight News – online edition (Minneapolis – November).

EWMC Acquisitions:
- Newsday (Trinidad and Tobago – September).

EWMC Lectures:
- Share 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;
- Banwari 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...History...to inform of [the] past as an essential guide to...future action.” Senior students from several secondary schools attended, including those from Queens 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.” Vaughan Biyan, student, Trinidad and Tobago

Dr. Margaret D. Rouse-Jones
Campus Librarian

New Acquisitions

Diane Dupres

A former political secretary to Eric Williams, Ms. Dupres 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 yesteryear, and reinforces Eric Williams’ own words:

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

Neil Desmond Espinet

With a longtime career in the petroleum industry under his belt, Mr. Espinet 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.

Dr. Margaret D. Rouse-Jones
Campus Librarian
## A Selection of Books

1. **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.

2. **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.  
   ISBN 4-7503-1845-0

3. **Education in the British West Indies** by Eric E. Williams (1951)  
   ISBN 1-8813-1684-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 1943.

4. **History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago** by Eric E. Williams (1962)  
   ISBN 1-8813-1668-8  
   - Celebrates Trinidad and Tobago’s Declaration of Independence on August 31, 1962, and details in full its colonial history.

5. **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.”

6. **British Historians and the West Indies** by Eric E. Williams (1966)  
   ISBN 1-8813-1664-5  
   - Focuses on the Jamaican Rebellion of 1865. This book examines British writers and “British attitudes to West Indian history… shows that much historical objectivity is no more than barely disguised prejudice.”

7. **From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969** 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 colonisers. The book defines “a profoundly important but neglected and misrepresented area of the world.”  
   ISBN 4-00-026538-5  
   ISBN 4-00-026539-3

8. **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 organised 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.

9. **British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams**  
   Edited by Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman (1987)  
   ISBN 0-5213-3478-0 (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.

10. **Eric E. Williams Speaks: Essays on Colonialism and Independence**  
    Edited by Selwyn R. Cudjoe (1993)  
    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.

    ISSN 0-1612-492  
    - Papers from the 1996 UWI/Harvard University co-sponsored Conference on Eric Williams.

12. **Caribbean Issues**, Vol. VIII, Nos. 1 & 2  
    ISSN 1-0270-361  
    - Re-examines Dr. Williams’ work, revisits his *magnum opus*, *Capitalism and Slavery* and embraces new developments and trends in the historiography.

13. **Capitalism & Slavery: Fifty Years Later – Eric E. Williams – A Reassessment of The Man & His Work**  
    ISBN 0-8204-4171-6  
    - Re-examines Dr. Williams’ work, revisits his *magnum opus*, *Capitalism and Slavery* and embraces new developments and trends in the historiography.

    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.
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 7th August 1939, Trinidad and Tobago-born Eric Eustace 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 JNH. 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.”
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-wartime 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, Timehri, 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
Accomplishments

Eric Williams Websites

Researchers and individuals worldwide continue to make active use of the Eric E. Williams website (http://palmf.fcla.edu/ew/) 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
- **‘Massa’ 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), 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; Medgar Evers Caribbean Research Center; Mexican Caribbean Studies; Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars; African Diaspora (New York University); *Groupe de Recherches en Littératures 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 instituted 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* –

**Erica Williams Connell:**

**March**

Florida Memorial College (Honours) 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: Archiving Black Culture

**September**

Florida International University Graduate Class.

Course: Caribbean Thought and Development

**October**

PNM (People’s National Movement)/UNC (United National Congress) group, Toronto, Canada.
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 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 Honors 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 Carter, Vice Consul (Miami).
- From Barbados – Hon. Dr. Jerome Walcott, Minister of Health; Consul General Ben Martinez, Joyce Bourne, Deputy Consul General, Urban Cumberbatch, Consul (Miami); Mr. Samuel Chandler, Permanent Secretary, Ministry Foreign Affairs; Dr. Joy St. John, Senior Medical Health Officer; Professor Hilary Beckles, Principal/Pro-Vice Chancellor, 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 8th 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.
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 Sunnatul Jamaat Association Girls College, Charlieville

Arima Government Secondary

Atlantic Education & Sports Institute

Belmont Junior Secondary

Bishop Anstey's High, East

Bishop’s Centenary College

Butler Rienzi Labour College

Carapichaima Senior Comprehensive

Cedros Composite

Chaguana Senior Composite

CIC

Coryal High

Cowen Hamilton Secondary

Debe High

Diego Martin Government Secondary

El Dorado Secondary Comprehensive

Fatima College

Five Rivers Junior Secondary

Fyzabad Composite

Gasparillo Composite

Hillview College

Holy Cross College

Holy Faith Convent, Penal

Lakshmi Girls Hindu College

Malabar Composite

Malick Senior Comprehensive

Mayaro Composite

Moruga Composite

Morvant-Laventille Senior Secondary

Naparima College

NIHERST Youth Group

Northeastern College

Northgate College

Pleasantville Senior Comprehensive

Polytechnic

Presentation College, Chaguana

and San Fernando

Princes Town Senior Comprehensive

Queen's Royal College

Rio Claro College

San Juan Government Secondary

San Fernando Technical Institute

Sangre Grande Junior Secondary

Shiva Boys Hindu College

Signal Hill Comprehensive, Tobago

Siparia Junior Secondary

Southeast Port of Spain Government Secondary

Southern Community College

St. Augustine Senior Secondary

Comprehensive

St. Dominics’s Convent

St. François 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

Transquility Government Secondary

Trinity College, East

Tunapuna Government Secondary

Tunapuna Junior Secondary

UWI School of Continuing Studies

Valencia High

**INTERNATIONAL**

Chicago Trinity United Church of Christ

People’s Cathedral School of Barbados
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 calypsoes 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 jurist and calypsoographer; Dr. Louis 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 Mora and the Mexican Association of Caribbean Studies. It will feature a new Introduction by Professor Humberto García-Muñíz 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 internecine 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 published 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”x24” prints to benefit the Collection, thanks to the generosity of Quentrall Industries (Trinidad & Tobago) which made available its extensive database for solicitation purposes. The card was also highlighted on the Oliver Cromwell Cox 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 Camps-Campins.

To purchase, please contact: ewc.suilan@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
  • Capitalism and Slavery – Spanish. Prior two editions were published in Argentina (1973) and in Cuba (1975).
  • Capitalism and Slavery – German. Never before translated.

Highlights

The “University” of Woodford Square

Contributors

NATIONAL

Angostura, Ltd.
Associated Brands, Ltd.
Atlantic LNG
British Gas
British Petroleum, Trinidad & Tobago, Ltd.
BWIA West Indies Airways
Caribbean Steel Mill
Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago
Citibank
Emile Elias & Co., Ltd.
First Citizens Bank
Innogen, Ltd.

INTERNATIONAL

AmCar Freight, Inc.
CARICOM Secretariat
Florida International University

I.T. McLeod Partnership
Lensyl Products, Ltd.
Errol and Yvonne Mahabir
Quentrall Industries
Royal Bank
Emile Sabga
Titan Methanol
Trinidad Cement, Ltd.
Trinidad & Tobago Trans Cable
Unit Trust Corporation
Yorke Structures, Ltd.

Jamalco (ALCOA, Jamaica)
Gloria Marquez
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...
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 adopted 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 Right 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.

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**Scholarships and Prizes**

**The Eric Williams Memorial Scholarship**

2003: **RADICA MAHASE**

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.

Course: **Capitalism and Slavery**

2003: **NAETTE YOKO LEE**

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

2003: **JULIAN PHILLIPS**
Organization of American States Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi publicly recalled Eric Williams’ enduring legacy at a week-long celebration in Washington, DC. It honoured 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 Heroes Convention was held in Trinidad and Tobago to promote the values of community and public service to the nation’s youth. In the Pioneer 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 fertilizers. Thus, its 1997 New York Times economic moniker, “A Tiger In A Sea Of Pussy Cats,” is still reflective of the country’s global reach. Flyers that reprised Williams’ legendary exhortation to the children of Trinidad and Tobago were also distributed to the approximately 5,000 attendees.

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The Eric Williams Memorial Collection’s annual Newsletter has been made possible through the generosity of the
Edited by Helen Kitti Smith and Erica Williams Connell, it is intended to highlight the activities of the Collection, to promote intellectual research and investigation,
Passing the Torch...
DePaul University
Dartmouth College
Cornell University
Columbia University
Columbia College, Chicago
Bowling Green State University
Brown University
Benedictine University
Boston College
Arizona State University, West
Amherst College
American University
Amherst College

Museum Commentary
“Humbling & important.”
C. J. Leaver
Oxford University, UK

“An inspiring experience. Propels one to soar to highest high.”
Sophia Almorales
Student, Trinidad and Tobago

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

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Edited by Helen Kitti 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 Proponit (History Provides the Blueprint)