



The Eric Williams Memorial Collection

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Eleventh Annual FIU Eric Williams Lecture Touts a New Vision for the Caribbean

MIAMI, Fla. (October 27, 2009)— The 11th Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture at Florida International University will take place on Friday, November 6, 2009 at 6:30 p.m., as part of FIU's African & African Diaspora Studies Program. As current events demand new prescriptions for emerging countries, this year's Distinguished Africana Scholars Lecture, "*A New Vision for A New World Reality: Prospects for the Anglophone Caribbean,*" promises to address critical issues of sustainable development for the region with a vibrant discussion of the implications for contemporary times.

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Former Jamaican Prime Minister and current Leader of the Opposition Mrs. Portia Simpson Miller will be the featured speaker at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center, Modesto A. Maidique campus, 11200 Southwest Eighth Street, Miami, Florida. Admission is free and open to the public.

Mrs. Portia Simpson Miller became Jamaica's first woman Prime Minister on March 30, 2006, having served seventeen years as a senior Cabinet Minister for Labor and Welfare – among her many other portfolios. She was conferred with the "*Order of the Nation*" on May 29, 2006. Mrs. Simpson Miller is a member of the Council of Women World Leaders, an international network of current and former women Presidents and Prime Ministers whose mission is to mobilize action on critical women's issues. In March 2007, she was awarded the International Olympic Committee's World "*Women and Sport*" Trophy for her outstanding dedication to women in Jamaican sport – both as athletes and administrators. The leading architect of Jamaica's Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development, Mrs. Simpson Miller has been tireless in promoting and strengthening urban renewal and community development, leading to fundamental reforms in local government.

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Established in 1999, the Lecture honors the distinguished Caribbean statesman Eric E. Williams, first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and head of government for a quarter of a century until his death in 1981. He led the country to Independence from Britain in 1962 and onto Republicanism in 1976. A consummate academic and historian, and author of several books, Dr. Williams is best known for his groundbreaking work, the 65-year-old Capitalism and Slavery, which has been translated into seven languages, including Russian, Chinese, Japanese and soon-to-be, Korean. Urdu and Hindi editions are also planned. Popularly referred to as *The Williams Thesis*, this landmark text continues to inform today's ongoing debate and remains “years ahead of its time...this profound critique is still the foundation for studies of imperialism and economic development,” according to the *New York Times*.

Among prior Eric Williams Memorial Lecture speakers have been: the late John Hope Franklin, one of America's premier historians of the African-American experience; Kenneth Kaunda, former President of the Republic of Zambia; Hon. Cynthia Pratt, Deputy Prime Minister of the Bahamas; Hon. Mia Mottley, Attorney General of Barbados; Beverly Anderson-Manley, former First Lady of Jamaica; the celebrated civil rights activist Angela Davis; and prize-winning Haitian author Edwige Danticat.

The Lecture, which seeks to provide an intellectual forum for the examination of pertinent issues in Caribbean and African Diaspora history and politics, is co-sponsored by: the Caribbean Consular Corps (Miami); Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; Delancyhill, P.A.; Diane Galloway's Herbal Gardens, Inc.; FIU: College of Arts and Sciences, School of International and Public Affairs, AADS Graduate Students' Association, Caribbean Students' Association, Council of Student Organizations, Latin American and Caribbean Center, National Society of Black Engineers, Ruth K. and Shepard Broad International Lecture Series, Student Government Association, Women's Studies, Women's Studies Graduate Students' Association; Jaskq Creations; Joy's Roti Delight; Trinidad & Tobago Diaspora, Inc.

The Lecture is also supported by The Eric Williams Memorial Collection at the University of the West Indies (Trinidad and Tobago campus), which was inaugurated by former **U.S. Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell** in 1998. It was named to UNESCO's prestigious *Memory of the World Register* in 1999.

Books by Eric Williams will be available for purchase and signing at the Lecture.

For more information, please contact 305-348-6860/271-7246 or africana@fiu.edu.