



# The Eric Williams Memorial Collection

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## Ninth Annual FIU Eric Williams Lecture Celebrates Slave Trade Abolition Bicentenary

**MIAMI, Fla.** (September 24, 2007)— The Ninth Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture at Florida International University will take place on Friday, October 5, 2007 at 6:30 p.m., as part of the African-New World Studies Program’s Distinguished Africana Scholars Lecture Series. As 2007 marks the Bicentenary of the British Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, this year’s lecture, “*Emancipation, the African Atlantic and the Long Road to Freedom,*” promises to address critical issues of the commerce in enslaved Africans and its abolition, with a vibrant discussion of the implications for contemporary times.

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Noted historians Joseph Inikori, Professor of History, University of Rochester, and Verene Shepherd, Professor of Social History, University of the West Indies, Jamaica, will be the featured speakers at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center, University Park, 11200 Southwest Eighth Street, Miami, Florida. Admission is free and open to the public.

Joseph Inikori is the author of *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*, which further develops Eric Williams’ own scholarship. Inikori’s book won the 2003 American Historical Association’s Leo Gershoy Award for “the most outstanding work in English on any aspect of the field of 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>- century western European history” and also the 2003 African Studies Association’s Herskovits Award.

“Verene Shepherd,” says Akin Ogundiran, Director of FIU’s African-New World Studies Program, “is a highly respected voice in Caribbean historiography and a dedicated public servant. Her prodigious scholarship and service to the historical profession and the Jamaican state have helped us rethink the significant contributions of Africans, Asians, and women to the socioeconomic foundations of Caribbean society.”

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

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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 ground-breaking work, the 63-year-old Capitalism and Slavery, which has been translated into eight languages, including Russian, Chinese, Japanese and this year for the first time, Korean. Few modern historical works have enjoyed its enduring intellectual impact and appeal, causing the 1997 *New York Times Book Review* to term “The Williams Thesis” as remaining on the “cutting edge of slave trade research in academic circles.”

Among prior Eric Williams Memorial Lecture speakers have been: John Hope Franklin, one of America’s premier African-American historians; 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; BP (Trinidad and Tobago); FIU’s Ruth K. and Shepard Broad Educational Series – Department of International Relations, Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Citizenship Studies, Department of History, Latin American & Caribbean Center, Caribbean Students’ Association, Student Government Association; Caribbean Airlines, Ltd.; Delancyhill, P.A.; Diane Galloway’s Herbal Gardens, Inc.; Dipcon Construction, Ltd.; Edwards & Partners, LLC; Joy’s Roti Shop; Laparkan Trading, Ltd.; The Lemon Garden; Miami Carnival Saturday Night Mas; Priscas Cosmetics; Royal Funeral Service, Inc.; Soca Afrique Creations; Suarez & Echeverri, P.A.; TravelSpan, Inc.; Zagada Markets.

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, Joseph Inikori and Verene Shepherd will be available for purchase and signing at the Lecture.

For more information, please contact 305-919-5521 or [africana@fiu.edu](mailto:africana@fiu.edu).

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