



The Eric Williams Memorial Collection

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Renowned Activist Angela Davis to Speak at FIU

MIAMI, Fla. (September 6, 2003)— The celebrated civil rights activist, Angela Davis, Professor in History of Consciousness and Chair of Women’s Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, will deliver the Fifth Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture at Florida International University, as part of the African-New World Studies Program Distinguished Africana Scholars Lecture Series.

“The significance of Angela Davis to civil, human and women’s rights and to Black activism internationally is well known. She remains an honored and prominent member of a generation of advocates and intellectuals who challenged the bases of inequality in the United States as it relates to African-Americans, women and people of color in general,” said Dr. Carole Boyce-Davies, Director of FIU’s African-New World Studies Program.

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Dr. Davis’ lecture, “Slavery and the Prison Industrial Complex” will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, September 19, at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center, University Park, 11200 Southwest Eighth Street, Miami, Florida. Admission is free and open to the public. Due to the level of interest in this event, tickets for auditorium seating will be issued from 6 p.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis. An overflow room with video hook-up will also be provided.

Born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, Davis is an accomplished cultural theorist and philosopher and continues to be a strong force for intellectual, political and social change. She ran for Vice President of the United States on the Communist Party ticket in 1980 and, more recently, has worked on issues relating to African-Americans in the justice system.

In the early 1960s, Davis studied in Europe, later earning a Bachelors Degree from Brandeis University, Massachusetts, in 1965. She holds a Masters Degree from the University of California,

San Diego. Her articles and essays have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, and she is the author of five books, including *Angela Davis: An Autobiography, Women, Race & Class*; and the recently-published *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday*. In 1998, *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, a collection of her writings spanning nearly three decades, was published.

The Memorial Lecture is named in honor of Eric Williams, the 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 himself, and author of several books, Dr. Williams is best known for his seminal work, *Capitalism and Slavery*, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2004. It has been translated into seven languages, including Russian, Chinese and Japanese. Few modern historical works have enjoyed its enduring intellectual impact and appeal and, as was termed in the 1997 *New York Times Book Review*, "The Williams Thesis," posited in that book, remains on the "cutting edge of slave trade research in academic circles."

Prior Eric Williams Memorial Lecture speakers have been: John Hope Franklin, one of America's premier Black historians; Kenneth Kaunda, former President of the Republic of Zambia; Hilary Beckles, noted Caribbean historian and professor; Hon. Cynthia Pratt, Deputy Prime Minister of the Bahamas; Hon. Mia Mottley, Attorney General of Barbados; and Beverly Anderson-Manley, former First Lady of Jamaica.

The Lecture is co-sponsored by the Eric Williams Memorial Collection at the University of the West Indies (Trinidad and Tobago campus), which was inaugurated by current **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 and Angela Davis will be available for purchase and signing at the Lecture. For more information please call Erica Williams Connell at 305-271-7246, ewc.suilan@juno.com.