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February 4, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

“ROSEWOOD” AUTHOR TO LECTURE AT EIU

CHARLESTON -- With the 1997 release of the movie “Rosewood,” the story of the 1923 massacre of a middle-class black community in Rosewood, Fla., has captured the attention of millions of Americans.

Arnette Doctor, author of “Like Judgment Day: The True Story Of Rosewood,” the book on which the film is based, and whose mother (then 11) was one of the few Rosewood inhabitants to escape the massacre, will speak at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, in the Grand Ballroom of Eastern Illinois University’s Martin Luther King Jr. University Union. Admission is \$1 for students with ID, \$3 for the general public.

The presentation is part of this year’s African-American Heritage Celebration at the university.

The story of “Rosewood” is based on a white woman’s false accusation that a black man had raped her and the ensuing seven-day race riot -- lynchings, murders and rapes -- which culminated with the town’s destruction. The death toll has been estimated at 40 to 150; no one knows the exact figure.

Doctor has campaigned for years in an effort to get Rosewood's history acknowledged. He spearheaded the campaign for Rosewood recognition in the Florida Legislature and, in 1994, the government voted \$2 million in compensation for the surviving families, most of whom had settled in Lacooshee, Florida. Rosewood itself was never rebuilt, although a few trailer park residents -- all white -- skirt the original townsite.