

March 2015

2nd Annual Walter Rodney Speakers Series (2014)

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WALTER RODNEY SPEAKER'S SERIES ---- REPORT

The 2nd Annual Walter Rodney Speaker's Series *January - May,* 2014

Thursdays, 5-7pm at the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

OVERVIEW

The Walter Rodney Speaker Series (WRSS) is a groundbreaking public lecture series that explores the life and work of Dr. Walter Rodney and his core contributions to Pan-Africanism, development theory, emancipatory pedagogy, and theories of race and class in the Caribbean, Africa and the rest of the world. The WRSS is conducted by Dr. Jesse Benjamin, Coordinator, African and African Diaspora Studies and Director, Global South Research Consortium and supported by the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library (AUC RWWL), the Walter Rodney Foundation (WRF), and Kennesaw State University (KSU).

Dr. Walter Rodney was a leading historian and scholar in the Pan-African tradition, with significant ties to the Atlanta area, but whose life was tragically cut short in 1980 when he was assassinated in his homeland, Georgetown, Guyana. Despite his death, Rodney's works are a living history and this lecture series seeks to keep his stories, his scholarship, and his perspectives in contemporary discourse; to introduce or re-introduce a cross-section of the public to this great man; and to explore how his legacy changed the path of others.

The public lectures were held at the AUC RWWL, from January 23rd – April 24th, on almost every Thursday night from 5:30 – 7:00pm, with students enrolled for credit at Clark Atlanta University (CAU), Morehouse College or KSU. The Series was widely publicized in Atlanta, via radio, print and social media, and attended by a broad cross-section of the public, as well as students from the AUC and neighboring schools. One session, during Spring Break at the AUC, was held off-site, at the Auburn Avenue Research Library. During the week of the 11th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, the WRSS promoted and was embedded in the Annual Symposium. WRSS speakers were extremely relevant and professionally distinguished in their various fields, discussions were always very deep and engaging, and the participation of the students was exceptional.

There was continued growth and support in the resource base for the WRSS in 2014 that made the 2nd Annual Speakers Series possible. The Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities at KSU generously renewed his support; the AUC RWWL renewed and increased theirs, to include both honoraria and in-kind resource support; and the WRF continued and expanded its supportive role in numerous capacities. New alliances with Project South and Universidad Sin Fronteras, provided additional in-kind support and sponsorship that included promotion, connection with constituencies and the involvement of high school students. On average, attendees varied from 50-100 per week.

THE SECOND ANNUAL
WALTER RODNEY
 PUBLIC SPEAKERS SERIES

Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library
 Thursdays, 5:30-6:45pm - Spring 2014
 111 James P. Brawley Drive SW, Atlanta, GA 30314



1/23 "Walter Rodney: A Framework for Knowledge, Analysis and Inspired Action"
 Asha T. Rodney, Walter Rodney Foundation & Andrea Jackson with an Archives Overview

1/30 "Race, Class, & Walter Rodney in the 1970s"
 Derrick White, History, Florida Atlantic University & "Education & Social Justice"
 "Able" Mable Thomas, Founding Director, Greater Vine City Opportunities Program Inc.

2/6 "Liberation by Labyrinth: Walter Rodney's Pedagogy of Caribbean History"
 Geoffroy de Laforcade, History, Norfolk University & "Grounding Walter Rodney in Critical Pedagogy"
 Seneca Vaught, History, Kennesaw State University

2/13 "Colonialism x Genocide: Reflections on Sartre's Formulation"
 Ward Churchill, American Indian Movement

2/20 Claim No Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amílcar Cabral
 Book Launch & Author's Roundtable
 Bill Fletcher, Makungu Akinyela, Kall Akuno, Ajamu Baraka, Jesse Benjamin, Mustafah Dhada, Hashim Gibril, Brandon Lundy & Asha T. Rodney

2/27 "Legal Theory and Colonialism"
 Natsu Saito & Tanya Washington, GA State University, College of Law, & Jed Kinnison, Independent Scholar

3/6 "Archaeology & Underdevelopment: Re-Examining the Material Record of the Colonial Era"
 Chapurukha Kusimba, Chair, Anthropology Dept, American University

3/13 "Walter Rodney & the Scholar/Activists of the IBW"
 Sue Ross, PhotoGriot, IBW Associate & "A Battle of Ideas: The Role of Media in the Liberation of Caribbean & Latin American Peoples"
 Lyndon (Kwame) Wilburg, Jose Perez, Sobukwe Kuumba & Don Rojas

3/20-21 The 11th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium
 "Africa: The Gateway"
 Groundings, Keynotes, Panels, and Many Other Details, TBA

4/10 "Georgia Gullah-Geechee Rights: Land, Taxes & Underdevelopment"
 Speakers, Community Leaders, and More, TBA

4/17 "History & Self-Confidence: From Walter Rodney to Michael Manley. The Development of Jamaica's National Identity"
 Fragano Ledgister, Political Science, Clark Atlanta University & "Thinking Politically About Underdevelopment"
 Andrew J. Douglas, Political Science, Morehouse College

4/24 FINAL SPEAKERS:
 TBA

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
 FOR MORE INFO:
JBENJAMIN@KENNESAW.EDU
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Poster for the 2014 Walter Rodney Speakers Series.
 Click the image for more information.



Asha T. Rodney, Esq., Ajamu Baraka, Bill Fletcher, Jr., Dr. Makungu Akinyela, Dr. Hashim Gibrill, and Dr. Brandon Lundy during the book launch for *Claim No Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amilcar Cabral*.



The audience watches as Tanya Washington, Esq., delivers her wisdom on Legal Theory and Colonialism.



Asha T. Rodney, Esq., GA State Representative "Able" Mable Thomas, Dr. Jesse Benjamin, Dr. Derrick White and Dr. Patricia Rodney pose after great presentations by Thomas and White.



Dr. Derrick White discusses race, class and Walter Rodney in the 1970s.



Dr. Geoffroy de Laforcade passionately presents "Liberation by Labyrinth: Walter Rodney's Pedagogy of Caribbean History."



The class portion meets with the inclusion of Dr. Geoffroy de Laforcade (after the public lecture).



Posing outside of the hip hop show that follows the Walter Rodney Symposium, an extension of the class, [from L to R] Kilifeu (of Keur-Gui), Vox Sambou, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Thiat (of Keur-Gui), DJ Gath (of Keur-Gui), Dr. Jesse Benjamin, and Dr. Chap Kusimba.



The class discusses a lecture in conjunction with the required readings.



A blend of community activists and students watch a lecture.



The audience engages with Tanya Washington's presentation.



During her presentation, Sue Ross shared photos from Dr. Rodney's time at the IBW in Atlanta. On the left is Sue Ross herself, and on the right is Dr. Walter Rodney (c. 1974).