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Introduction

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Greetings!

We are pleased to present this issue of *Groundings*, a publication of [The Walter Rodney Foundation](#). We want to share with you news about the Foundation's activities and to provide a platform for discussion and engagement on issues related to the ideas of Walter Rodney.

As promised, this issue begins with coverage of key Walter Rodney Foundation (WRF) events from 2014. First, we review the 11th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium: "Africa: The Gateway," held on March 21st-22nd, 2014. We begin with some brief text covering the program's highlights, and a copy of the Symposium poster. Once you click on the poster, you can view the full Symposium Program. There were many exceptional speakers and presenters, great student participation, and our first full Groundings sessions.

There is a growing local and international community that has coalesced around the annual Symposia. Several hundred people attended over the 2-day program, and the selected photos capture a glimpse of the energy and good vibes shared by all. In a program packed with highlights, it was perhaps the deeply personal and moving recollections of Bobby Hill, and Ngugi wa Thiongo's impromptu birthday song to Asha Rodney in Gikuyu that moved the crowd the most.

Next, we review the 2nd Annual Walter Rodney Speakers Series (WRSS), held from January 23rd – April 24th, 2014. We begin with some text, explaining the public lecture series and its developments, and follow this with the official poster used to promote the WRSS. Here too, we hope the photos capture some of the excitement of the process, as students taking the series for college credit, and members of the community participated in the consistently enlightening discussion forums. Of special note are the unique photos shared with us by WRSS speaker Sue Ross, that depict Walter Rodney and Sue Ross while Walter Rodney was conducting research and teaching at the Institute of the Black World (IBW) in Atlanta.

In the "Special Attention" section, we present an original contribution from BocaFloja, a recurring guest contributor to the Annual Symposium and Speakers Series, where he analyzes the context and meaning of the recent massacre of college students in Ayotzinapa, Mexico. This is a revised version of a speech BocaFloja delivered at Kennesaw State University in January 2015, en route to joining a discussion on police brutality for the launch of the 3rd Annual Walter Rodney Speakers Series, hosted by a panel of youth activists from Project South.

Next you will find the poster for the upcoming 12th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, to be held March 20-21 in Atlanta, around the theme "Hungry Nation, Hungry World: Engendering Healthy Sustainable Food Systems." The Symposium will explore the global need for adequate, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods and the issues of underdevelopment, colonialism, globalization and land-alienation that impact efforts to develop healthy sustainable food systems. Please join us at the Symposium and participate in the Groundings Sessions or watch live-streaming

of main portions of the event if you cannot make it in person.

We are also very pleased to share the announcement of the recently formed Walter Rodney Press (WRP), which just released a new, authorized edition of *The Groundings with My Brothers*. The WRP is a non-traditional press, whose function is to exclusively publish and republish works by Dr. Walter Rodney. This section is rounded out by some memorable WRF-related moments that were captured in recent photos.

We then publish the words of Dr. Michael O. West, as he reflected on the meaning of the 40th anniversary of the publication of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. We are pleased to share these important thoughts, previously presented at S.U.N.Y Binghamton, with our audience here! We conclude this issue with an updated listing of the WRF Board and Committee members; remembrances of friends and fellow travelers that joined the ancestors this past year; and information about the Rodney Papers in the AUC RWWL archive.

Finally, we continue to accept contributions to *Groundings*. These should be short (no more than 3000 words), clearly written, with a minimal use of jargon. We welcome critical analyses but not profanity. Articles, book reviews, commentary, letters to the editors, poems and other forms of artistic expression should be sent to GroundingsJournal@gmail.com. It is not our intent to publish everything that is submitted.

We look forward to the upcoming Rodney Symposium and hope you will join us in person if you are in the area. Look out for the next issue of *Groundings* which will share with you the details and photos from the 3rd Annual WRSS and the 12th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium and updates about other WRF projects. Ashe.

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