

## **Call for Papers**

**The Walter Rodney Conference**

**University of the West Indies, Mona**

**Jamaica**

**October 16-18, 2008**

The Institute of Caribbean Studies and the Centre for Caribbean Thought, in association with the Guild of Students, UWI, Mona and the Africana Studies Department, Brown University, invite abstracts for a conference, to be convened from October 16-18, 2008 at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October 16, 1968 student protests resulting from the expulsion of Walter Rodney.

The Mona campus was cordoned off by the police and military for two weeks and staff and students engaged in self-searching discussions about the political situation and the character of the University itself and its mission. Revisiting this historic moment is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the University of the West Indies.

The impact of the Rodney protests was felt throughout the Caribbean region and especially at the UWI campuses in Trinidad and Barbados and at the University of Guyana. There were protests in London, the United States and elsewhere. These protests internationalised the local events and contributed to the emergence of newspapers such as *Abeng* in Jamaica, *Moko* in Trinidad and *Ratoon* in Guyana. The October 1968 events helped to stimulate the radicalisation of Caribbean politics and culture in the 1970s and challenged the Caribbean to consider alternative ways of thinking about and building egalitarian societies in the early years after political independence.

Walter Rodney's intellectual and political work reinvigorated and refined the radical Pan-African tradition in the 1960's and 70's. His reflections on 1968 and some of his articles and speeches were published in 1969 in *The Groundings With My Brothers*. His return to the University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania in 1969 saw him continue his scholarly work on African history as well as his collaboration with liberation movements based in the Tanzanian capital. In 1972 his classic book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* appeared. Walter Rodney returned to Guyana in 1974 and was denied employment at the University of Guyana by the administration of Forbes Burnham. Rodney, one of the leaders of the Working People's Alliance, was killed on June 13, 1980 when an explosive he thought was a walkie-talkie, given to him by a soldier in the Guyana Defence Force, detonated. His book, *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905*, was published posthumously in 1981.

## **CONFERENCE THEMES:**

- **Walter Rodney's Academic and Political Legacy**
- **Pan-Africanism Revisited**
- **Marxism in the Caribbean**
- **Student Activism in the Contemporary Caribbean**
- **Anti-colonial movements in the Caribbean**
- **Black Power in the Caribbean**
- **Gendering Black Power**
- **Rastafari and Political Activism in Jamaica**
- **Grassroots Journalism in the Caribbean**
- **Oral Histories of the Rodney Protests**
- **Literary Representations of Revolutionary Politics in the Caribbean**
- **Rodney, Revolution and Popular Music**

The themes outlined above are not exhaustive or mutually exclusive and are intended as a guide/focus for panels and papers. We invite submission of research paper abstracts by September 8, 2008. Submissions should include:

- 1) an abstract of not more than 300 words
- 2) a cover page with name, affiliation, contact information and short bio (75 words or less)

**Email your submission to:**

**Leon Burrell**

**Conference Co-ordinator**

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