

# NEWS RELEASE

## Wilfrid Laurier University



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### **Laurier to hold public symposium on hatred in Canada**

**Waterloo, Ont. (Feb. 15)** — Academics are going to stare into the ugly face of hatred in Canada and ask some tough questions at a public symposium at Wilfrid Laurier University on Friday, March 4.

Nine leading experts will explore the current manifestations of hatred and how it can be prevented during the day-long event "The Legacies of Fascism in Canada."

"Hatred is more pervasive in Canada than we want to think," says Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, a professor of sociology and co-organizer of the event. "We must expose it. We have a responsibility to take action."

The first of two sessions will examine some of the roots of fascist support, anti-Semitism and racism in Ontario, Holocaust denial, and challenges to multiculturalism. The second session will explore strategies to prevent hatred from arising or spreading, through education, research, legislation, and the courts.

"The symposium is very much an example of academics exercising their moral responsibility," says Irwin-Zarecka.

The event is being organized, in part, in response to racist incidents in Kitchener-Waterloo.

The symposium is being sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Research Committee and the Office of Graduate Studies at Laurier.

The event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Paul Martin Centre on campus.

Alice L. Eckardt, one of the pioneers in the area of post-Holocaust reevaluation of Christian theology, will present a lecture on the eve of the symposium. Her presentation, entitled "The Christian and Jewish Story: Reflections of a Christian Historian," will begin at 8 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, in the John Aird Centre recital hall.

***Note: A schedule and speakers list is included. Audio feed will be provided at the event.***