

NEWS RELEASE

**Wilfrid Laurier
University**



Anthropologist named Laurier's research professor of the year

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WATERLOO — One of Laurier's most active and prolific scholars has been named the 1999-2000 University Research Professor. The award relieves the recipient of teaching and administrative duties, allowing him to concentrate on a research project.

Anthropology professor Mathias Guenther will spend the year working on the sixth book on his major area of research: the Bushmen of southern Africa. The new book will focus on Bushman art and will bring together information he has gathered on annual fieldwork trips taken since 1994.

"He is one of our most active and prolific scholars," said dean of graduate studies and research Dr. Barry McPherson, "a scholar who has truly left a mark on his discipline and has brought an international reputation to Laurier."

Guenther has been a Laurier (and Waterloo Lutheran Seminary) professor since 1971, and over the years has introduced countless students to the Bushmen of southern Africa. A reviewer from outside of Laurier described him as "a world expert on Bushman religion and Bushman art. "He's on the cutting edge of current anthropological theory."

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Guenther's previous books were *The Farm Bushmen of the Ghanzi District, Botswana*; *The Nharo Bushmen of Botswana: Tradition and Change*; *Bushman Folktales: Oral Traditions of the Nharo of Botswana and /Xam of the Cape*; and *Tricksters and Trancers: Bushman Religion and Society*. He is currently working on a history of the Bushmen.

The research professorship includes a grant of \$5,000, which will cover one two-week visit, allowing Guenther to ask some specific questions.