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Laurier expert alert: International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

WATERLOO – International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples takes place Aug. 9. The following Wilfrid Laurier University experts are available to comment about topics related to Indigenous peoples and Indigenous rights:

[Erich Fox Tree](#) is an associate professor in Laurier's Department of Religion and Culture. Trained in cultural and linguistic anthropology, he specializes in indigenous histories, myths and languages in the Americas. He is the world's leading expert on ancient sign languages, such as those used for thousands of years by deaf and hearing peoples in Central America, Mexico, the United States and Canada. Fox Tree has also studied local indigenous struggles for rights, lands and cultural autonomy in the context of pan-indigenous social movements. Since the onset of the coronavirus crisis, he has been tracking how governments across the Americas have been using the pandemic as a pretext to restrict indigenous rights, deny aid, seize lands and resources, interfere with customs, and even support violence against indigenous peoples. Contact: efoxtree@wlu.ca

[Allen Jorgenson](#) is a professor and assistant dean at Martin Luther University College. He is an expert on comparative theology and theologies of religious pluralism, including how contemporary theology can be informed by Indigenous worldviews. Jorgenson is available to comment about reconciliation efforts between Christian denominations and Indigenous peoples. Contact: ajorgenson@luther.wlu.ca

[Alex Latta](#) is an associate professor in the departments of Global Studies and Geography and Environmental Studies. He is an expert on Indigenous rights and natural resources, particularly water. Latta is available to comment about environmental and resource issues in Indigenous communities in Canada, particularly in the Northwest Territories, and Latin America, particularly Chile. Contact: alatta@wlu.ca

[Miguel Sioui](#) is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. He is an expert on Indigenous knowledges, as well as Indigenous land-use and environmental management, particularly in eastern and northern Ontario, northern Quebec, the Northwest Territories and Yucatan, Mexico. Sioui is of Huron-Wendat descent. Contact: msioui@wlu.ca

[Karen Stote](#) is an assistant professor in the Women and Gender Studies program. Her research has focused on colonialism and the history of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. In her first book, *An Act of Genocide: Colonialism and the Sterilization of Aboriginal Women*, Stote documented the coerced sterilization of Indigenous women in Canada within the larger context of colonialism, the oppression of women and the denial of Indigenous sovereignty. In her most recent research project, she is studying the coerced sterilization of Indigenous women in Saskatchewan from 1970 to 2015 and the formation of family planning policy and practice in that province. Contact: kstote@wlu.ca

[Darren Thomas](#) is an assistant professor in the [Indigenous Studies](#) program. He is an expert on Indigenous law, Indigenous health and well-being and self-determination. His research has examined Indigenous rights and resource governance, including in northern Ontario's Ring of Fire. Contact: dthomas@wlu.ca