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## Laurier expert alert: Emancipation Day

WATERLOO – Emancipation Day is Aug. 1. It's a day to raise awareness about a time when Black and Indigenous Peoples were enslaved on the lands that now make up Canada. The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 came into effect on August 1, 1834, beginning the formal end of slavery in the British Empire.

On March 24, 2021, the House of Commons unanimously voted to officially designate August 1 as Emancipation Day. While Emancipation Day was only officially recognized in Canada in 2021, Black communities in Canada have been celebrating it since the 1850s.

Wilfrid Laurier University has two experts available to discuss and raise awareness of topics related to Emancipation Day.

[Ciann L. Wilson](#), associate professor in Laurier's Department of Psychology, centres her work within critical race and anti-colonial theories. Wilson engages in community-based health research with Black, Indigenous and racialized communities around topics such as education, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, social determinants and well-being. Last year, [Wilson was honoured with the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations' Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction](#) for her dedication to community transformation and racial justice. Since 2020, she has been a [member of the Region of Waterloo's Anti-Racism Working Group](#). [Read more about her work](#).

[Alexandra Boutros](#), associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies, is an expert on fan culture, popular culture, race and cultural production, and popular music, with a particular focus on hip-hop. Her research has focused on the intersection of media, technology and identity within religious, social and cultural movements. She has studied the Black diaspora, Haitian Vodou, Vodou in popular culture, ubiquitous computing and Afrofuturism, focusing on social networking arising out of images of Black technologized subjectivity. She has also created and taught a course on Canadian hip-hop icon Drake.

To set up an interview, please reach out to Aonghus Kealy, communications and media relations officer, at [akealy@wlu.ca](mailto:akealy@wlu.ca).

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