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Laurier professor lectures on humanity's grim prospects

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University professor Garry Potter will deliver a public lecture entitled *Dystopia* on February 25 at Kitchener City Hall. Carrying the tagline, “the future is coming: panic now!” the lecture will focus on humanity’s grim prospects for the immediate future.

Potter’s lecture is based on his dystopia thesis, which puts forth that no matter how unlikely a connection may seem, there are links between all of society’s problems.

“The dystopia thesis not only predicts degradation, brutality, disease and starvation for the future, it documents it as fact in the present,” Potter said. “The living nightmare is already here for a billion people on the planet, but the world financial crisis, the ‘peak oil’ energy crisis and global warming will soon brutally interact with existing problems of poverty, disease and suffering.”

Potter’s lecture will outline the enormous obstacles to solving these problems, including the dangerous optimistic illusions that he claims most people possess.

“The overall world political economic system has a limited time frame for solving problems built into it,” Potter said. “But today’s problems have longer time frames.”

While Potter’s lecture features a grim outlook for the future, he will focus on an orientation toward solutions.

“I want people to come away with an enhanced sense of urgency of the problems facing us and a more attentive and creative way of developing solutions,” he said.

Potter is an associate professor of sociology at Laurier. His academic interests include social theory, the philosophy of social science, sociology of knowledge, and critical realism. He is the author of *The Bet: Truth in Science, Literature and Everyday Knowledges* and *The Philosophy of Social Science: New Perspectives*.

The lecture will take place Wednesday, February 25 at 7p.m. in the Kitchener City Hall council chambers lecture theatre. It is sponsored by the City of Kitchener and Wilfrid Laurier University and is free and open to the public. No advanced registration is necessary.