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Laurier Unplugged presents author Michael Harris: The End of Absence in the Age of Screens

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University welcomes Governor General Award-winning author Michael Harris for his presentation, “The End of Absence in the Age of Screens.” His talk, which takes place Feb. 12 from 4-5 p.m. in Laurier’s Paul Martin Centre, is based on his book, *The End of Absence: Reclaiming What we’ve Lost in a World of Constant Connection*.

Harris argues that one of the most interesting changes experienced by those who have lived with and without the Internet is the lack of opportunity to be alone with your own thoughts, that the “daydreaming silences in our lives are filled” and that there is no true free time in the age of smartphones.

Harris’ talk is hosted by Laurier Unplugged, a group organized by Laurier faculty, staff and students that explores how media changes how students work, socialize, feel and think, and works to legitimize those who look for opportunities to “disconnect.”

Harris received the 2014 Governor General’s Literary Award for Nonfiction for *The End of Absence*, which was also long listed for the BC National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction and the RBC Taylor Prize, and was listed in the *Globe and Mail’s* Top 100 Books of 2014 and *Maisonneuve Magazine’s* Best Books of 2014.

Harris writes about technology, the arts, and subcultures for publications including *Wired*, *Salon*, *Huffington Post*, *The Globe & Mail*, *The National Post*, and *The Walrus*. He is a former editor at *Vancouver* magazine and *Western Living*.

The event is sponsored by Laurier’s Council for the Intellectual and Cultural Development of the Arts (CICDA), a student organization that aims to develop the academic, professional and social lives of students in Laurier’s Faculty of Arts.

The talk is free and open to the public, and books will be available for purchase. The event will be live streamed to Laurier’s Brantford campus in room RCW202. For event information, please contact Maria DiCenzo at mdicenzo@wlu.ca. For more information about Laurier Unplugged, visit: www.laurierunplugged.com.

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