

Media Release

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Catherine Gidney Part of “Emerging Generation of Intellectual Leadership” as Adjunct Professor Elected to Royal Society’s College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists

An award-winning historian of education whose research examines contemporary youth culture and children’s physical and mental health has been named to a prestigious national scholarly association.

St. Thomas University adjunct history professor Catherine Gidney has been elected to the Royal Society of Canada’s College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists, Canada’s only national system of recognition for the emerging generation of intellectual leadership.

Gidney’s scholarly work has established her as a leading historian of Canadian education. Her research on youth culture, nutrition, commercialism, physical education, moral education, psychology and student mental health provides greater context for understanding contemporary educational patterns and initiatives. Her other work has tracked the transformation of Canadian universities into modern institutions over the course of the twentieth century.

“Professor Gidney’s scholarship on education, public schooling and Canadian identity not only clarifies what has happened, it addresses issues of current importance to our society and informs public policy in these important fields,” said Dawn Russell, St. Thomas University president and vice-chancellor.

“It’s an honour to be selected for the RSC’s College and I look forward to the collaborative opportunities that this organization offers,” said Gidney.

Gidney, who earned a PhD from Queen’s University and held a Hannah Institute for the History of Medicine Postdoctoral Fellowship and a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Waterloo, has been an adjunct research professor at STU since 2006.

In addition to her work on the history of education and health, Gidney has made important contributions to the understanding of the relationship between militarism and national identity in books on the history of war resistance and the connections between feminism, militarism and national identity. She recently shifted her focus to examine contemporary public schooling and is nearing completion of a study on the rise of in-school commercialism in areas such as corporate teaching aids and fundraising and junk food.

Gidney is the author of two books and two co-edited collections, and has published 16 peer-reviewed articles or chapters. Her first book won the Founders’ Prize from the Canadian History of Education Association, and her articles have been recognized by the American History of Education Society and the Canadian History of Education Association. She has also taken on a leadership role in scholarly publishing and academic service, and has served as an executive member of several academic associations.

Gidney is the second professor from the university to join the Royal Society. Michael Dawson, a professor in the Department of History, was named to the College in 2014. His expertise is in the comparative history of national identity and popular culture, and the global history of sport.

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