

## **Christopher J. Ruty, Ph.D.**

**Professional Historian, Researcher, Writer, Consultant**  
**Specialist in History of Medicine, Public Health, Infectious Diseases & Biotechnology in Canada**

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Dr. Christopher J. Ruty has been a professional medical historian in private practice since earning a Ph.D. in History from the University of Toronto (1990-95). His post-secondary education began in the Classical Animation program at Sheridan College (1981-84), but shifted to the sciences, history of science & medicine, and history, while at the University of Western Ontario (1985-89).

An essay on the history of a poliomyelitis outbreak in Ontario, and the experience of musician Neil Young with polio when he was a 5-year-old boy, sparked a passion for researching the history of “the crippler” in Canada. An MA in History at Western followed (1989-90) with a thesis focused on polio in Ontario. With supervision from Professor Michael Bliss, author of *The Discovery of Insulin*, Chris’ Ph.D. dissertation explored polio epidemics in Canada as well as the major contributions made in Canada to the development of polio vaccines, especially at Connaught Laboratories, which was part of the University of Toronto from 1914 to 1972.

Research in the Connaught Archives led to opportunities to provide historical services for Connaught, which prompted Dr. Ruty to establish “Health Heritage Research Services” to offer historical research, writing, archival, creative and consulting services to a variety of clients. While Connaught (which today is Sanofi Pasteur Canada) has remained Dr. Ruty’s primary client, he has provided historical services to many others, including St. Mary’s General Hospital in Kitchener, for which he prepared, *A Circle of Care: St. Mary’s General Hospital: 75 Years of Caring* (1999); the Canadian Nurses Association, for which he prepared, *Canadian Nurses Association: One Hundred Years of Service, 1908-2008* (2008); the Canadian Public Health Association, *This is Public Health: A Canadian History*, for its centenary in 2010; and for Public Health Ontario he researched the history of the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (2016). Dr. Ruty has also curated historical exhibits for the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, including “Insulin: Toronto’s Gift to the World” set up at MaRS (2011), and for the Museum of Health Care in Kingston, he curated, “Vaccines & Immunization: Epidemics, Prevention & Canadian Innovation” (2013-14).

As “resident historian” based at Sanofi Pasteur Canada’s Connaught Campus for almost 25 years, Dr. Ruty has provided a wealth of historical research, writing, archival, creative and consulting services to support communications, public / medical / scientific / immunization policy, human resources, and manufacturing. Most notable projects include: producing travelling exhibits on the history of polio and pertussis vaccines (2005-06); curating a Heritage Room (2011), where he leads regular tours for employees and site visitors; spearheading the company’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary initiative (2014); and developing the online “Legacy Project” (2015) (<http://thelegacyproject.ca>).

In 2014, Dr. Ruty joined the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, as an Adjunct Lecturer, based in the Division of Clinical Public Health. In 2018 he became an Adjunct Professor, and is also a faculty member of the new “Centre for Vaccine Preventable Diseases.” For DLSPH, Dr. Ruty has provided a variety of historical services, including curating displays and hallway exhibits showcasing the history of the School. He has also led seminars, particularly on the history of tuberculosis, and researched the history of the public health medicine speciality. He has also worked with the U. of T. Office of Research & Innovation to produce a series of articles for the Connaught Fund website that focus on the research and innovation legacy of Connaught Labs while it was a vital part of the U. of T. (<http://connaught.research.utoronto.ca/history>).