

3C—Professional Practice #1

In Solidarity? Labour Activism at York University: The Fight for Parity by Part-time Librarians and Archivists

Joanne Wadden, University of Toronto

The negative impact of neoliberal and austerity policies on post-secondary education in Ontario has been well-documented. Beilin (2016) extends this critique to describe the “hallmarks” of the neoliberal academic library, including the need to justify itself in terms of cost, efficiency, and performance metrics; however, the use of increasingly precarious and low-waged labour is also a central feature of neoliberalism. This paper discusses the formation of a new union local of part-time librarians and archivists at York University as a means to resist the neoliberal constraints on the broader academic community, where education and employment have become an uncertain promise.