Introduction

While the trade union status and structures of representation for academic librarians vary across Canada, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) *Librarian Salary and Academic Status Survey 2012* reveals that a large proportion of academic librarians employed at Canadian universities are members of certified trade unions that include faculty members and that serve as the exclusive agent for every librarian and faculty member in the bargaining unit. A collective agreement—a legally enforceable, binding contract negotiated between employers and unions—provides the “framework for working conditions” and outlines the terms and conditions of employment for the represented members.\(^1\) The means for arriving at the collective agreement is collective bargaining, a process which has been described as a prescribed ritual.\(^2\) Bargaining is oftentimes a puzzling exercise. The union comes to the table with many demands (some of them extreme) and little in the way of leverage (except job action, i.e., a strike, which is an option of last resort). Sometimes employers look for major concessions, but sometimes not; they hold most of the cards. So what is their incentive to give the union anything? Usually they have a legal obligation to bargain in good faith, which means they are obliged to try to reach an agreement. Bargaining resembles a kind of dance—Roger Fisher and William Ury call it a “minuet”\(^3\) which involves short steps—but you can dance for a very long time. Countless hours are spent preparing bargaining proposals, and discussing and negotiating these proposals both with the employer and amongst one’s own team, only to toss
many of them aside and negotiate much of the agreement in a very short period of time, often in the final hours. You “get” things on occasion for reasons that can seem arbitrary and are often a function of timing and the right conditions, or the result of what the CAUT Bargaining Manual describes as “creative compromise.”

Understanding and learning how to both navigate and manipulate the collective bargaining process can be very rewarding for those who find themselves a minority group in a larger union, like academic librarians. What follows is an attempt to demystify and guide academic librarians through the process offering personal insights as well as the experiences of other academic librarians who have also been “at the table.”

Background to Unionization for Academic Librarians

Much has been written about the “historical marginalization of librarianship” due to the fact that, as Roma Harris writes, it is a “woman’s profession” and the “undervaluing of library work [is] a product of its gendered nature.”

Describing the status of academic librarians in the US in the early 20th century, Orvin Lee Shiflett writes, “[a]cademic librarians not at the higher administrative levels came to be viewed as workers by library directors, who saw their own role of administration as keeping the employees to the tasks at hand.” Dee Garrison writes, “[i]n librarianship, as in teaching and social work, the presence of women made more likely the development of an authoritative administrative structure with a stress on rules and generally established principles to control the activities of employees.”

The trajectory of collective bargaining for academic librarians can be seen as a desire for change that stemmed partly from “the attempts of its members to mimic the higher status male professions.” As pointed out by Rachel A. Fleming-May and Kimberley Douglas, “as early as the 1911 Annual Meeting of the American Library Association, W.E. Henry presented the ‘revolutionary’ idea that ‘the librarian or head of the staff should have the rank and pay of a professor,’ and assistant librarians should be afforded academic rank.” Furthermore, “the rationale Henry presented in support of this edict, that ‘librarianship is a learned profession’ whose members should be ‘respected as educators by the faculty, not merely for the satisfaction of the staff but for the good of the library,’ is essentially the same as that presented today.”

In addition to the issue of gender, underpinning unionization and collective bargaining for academic librarians is “class conflict.” Michael F. Winter, who has written extensively on the sociology of librarianship writes, “[most] of us immediately recognize the organizational activities of unions as part of class conflict in industrial society, but we are slower to see this as an essential factor in the development of a profession.” Winter continues,

The attempt to procure professional status is a keenly competitive process, elitist in form, which has for its major goal the appropriation of social rewards through restriction of access to privileged kinds of work...
Despite the mystification of the class conflict dimension of the professionalization process, it is clear upon examination that it is exclusivist as well as elitist in nature. Viewed positively, the defense of occupational interests is an attempt to protect one’s field of work. But viewed negatively, it is also an attempt to exclude allegedly “unqualified” others from the rewards of practice.\textsuperscript{11}

It has been noted that “academics are generally not ideologically committed to the labor movement but rather are pragmatically concerned to improve their own terms of employment and professional standing”\textsuperscript{12} and this holds true of academic librarians. Collective agreements define “the status of librarians as professionals by differentiating their function and responsibilities from those of paraprofessionals.”\textsuperscript{13} However, through collective agreements and the process of collective bargaining which secures those agreements, academic librarians seek to exclude those perceived to be unqualified from encroaching on their work (i.e., paraprofessionals) while simultaneously seeking to encroach on the territory previously perceived to be the territory of their faculty member colleagues. Meanwhile many faculty members seek to exclude librarians, whom they do not perceive as their equals, from the rewards of practice which include status and associated privileges and entitlements such as competitive salaries.

Unionization and the associated process of collective bargaining have provided academic librarians over the last few decades with some increased measure of control over their work, social and political status, and, not to be discounted, tangible material rewards. This is increasingly important where, as pointed out by Stephen Aby, “the trend in higher education over the last couple of decades has undermined the practice of shared governance.”\textsuperscript{14} “Universities are becoming increasingly corporatized and entrepreneurial, both in their values and in their management. Where once decisions were made by faculty and administrators together in a climate of collegial decision-making, now they are increasingly made by administrators exercising their management rights in a corporate model of governance.”\textsuperscript{15} Ernst Benjamin calls unionization the “antidote to corporatization.”\textsuperscript{16} As pointed out by Tina Hovekamp, “unionization provides a venue to secure the employees’ role in college governance” and “collective bargaining guarantees the employees representation in the shaping of their working conditions.”\textsuperscript{17} Lothar Spang and William P. Kane write,

[a]cademic librarians traditionally have had their interests represented through one or more means from among four choices acting singly in negotiating their own interests with administrators; relying on the judgement and goodwill of supervisors to promote librarian interests; participating in collaborative ventures with their fellow librarians to enhance professional interests; and/or; if available, joining a union, most often a large teacher collective for formal negotiations.\textsuperscript{18}
Of these four options, being a member of a union is arguably the most advantageous choice with non-unionized academic librarians enviously eyeing the rights and privileges of unionized academic librarians. As CAUT points out an “association’s strength is based on collective organization” and “unionization marks a significant shift in the balance of power” and “removes the employer’s unilateral right to determine the terms and conditions of employment.”

According to Rajinder Garcha and John C. Phillips, the “evidence is overwhelming that unionized librarians earn higher salaries than non-unionized librarians” (although this has been disputed by some studies) and that rights of increasing concern to academic librarians, such as “academic and intellectual freedom must be secured contractually.”

The Movement by Academic Librarians to Unionize at York University

On October 28, 1970, Ontario university presidents received a circular from John B. Macdonald, Executive Director, regarding a survey undertaken by Dr. W.G. Tamblyn, President of Lakehead University, of the status of librarians in Ontario universities. “Included are the responses of 12 university presidents outlining current practice in their institutions. Nine of the Presidents mention ‘pressure’ or ‘rumblings’ at their respective universities. One states ‘within recent months, I have heard half a dozen of our colleagues mention the fact that questions concerning the contractual arrangements with professional librarians are becoming a pressing matter within their respective institutions.”

Librarians across the province were beginning to organize and, as will be revealed in this chapter, being “organized” is critical to achieving improvements for librarians at the bargaining table.

From 1962–1976, the York University Faculty Association (YUFA) was a voluntary association that promoted the interests of tenure-track/tenured teaching staff at York. In 1975, librarians joined faculty members in a move to form a trade union. The initiative on the part of librarians was spearheaded by a small group of politically astute and active librarians who saw clearly the advantages of aligning themselves with faculty, particularly from a labour perspective. This was part of a broader movement, as outlined by Martha Bufton in another chapter in this collection. As writes Jennifer Dekker:

“[L]ibrarians are present in the first collective agreement (1976–1978) ratified by YUFA after it became certified as a labour union. The background to this achievement for York librarians dates back to 1969–1970, when a group of librarians appealed to York administration to review the status, salaries and professional opportunities available to them at York University. A Committee called the Presidential Committee on Professional Librarians was formed and met regularly throughout 1975...”
and 1976. This committee, in addition to addressing the professional concerns of librarians, acknowledged that gender issues had contributed to the inequities experienced by the librarians. The following is from the minutes of the meeting of August 27, 1975: ‘Librarianship is a sex-stereotyped profession and has been paid and evaluated in the past on that basis; in addition, men are, within the (York) system, very quickly promoted through the ranks to middle and upper management, so that women constitute almost the entire membership of the lowest professional ranks’.23

The Report of the Presidential Committee on Professional Librarians, also known as the Stewart Commission, stated that: “[p]hilosophically and logically, the committee agreed that 100% parity in salary scale between Librarians and Faculty (particularly if this report is accepted) was justified.”24 In 1985, Betty Joe Irvine described librarianship as suffering from “intraoccupational sex segregation” where “men dominate the pinnacle of a profession’s institution and women its base.”25 Academic librarians have used collective bargaining to combat occupational segregation where, as Sarah Pritchard describes, “inequities [are] evident within the profession and when the profession is compared to others.”26 It is a common theme in the literature of the female-intensive fields that there exists “the need to adopt the values and definitions of the higher prestige male professions in order to advance their own status.”27 On August 29, 1973, Acting-Director of Libraries, Bill Newman, in a letter to the Secretary of Senate, asks that “the Senate Library Committee recognize that librarians should have academic status appropriate to being ‘contributors to the academic enterprise’.”28 A chronology of events leading up to unionization states that on July 1, 1974, “York librarians become eligible for membership in YUFA, York University Faculty Association, following a unanimous vote by the membership at the March general meeting to accept them, and after appropriate constitutional changes.”29 It was an historic moment, securing York librarians a leadership position with respect to academic librarians and faculty association participation in Canada, a role that was to be assumed on numerous occasions in later years. Described by one librarian as entering “uncharted territory,” the move to unionize was prescient on the part of academic librarians at York but not necessarily welcomed by all at the time. There was reluctance by some York academic librarians to abandon the emphasis on performing duties in the library to meet the demands and expectations associated with adopting continuing appointment procedures, such as research and scholarship. However, what cannot be denied is that in future years it is as members of YUFA and through collective bargaining that York librarians were able to achieve many significant gains in pursuit of parity with teaching faculty. This included the negotiation of salaries from amongst the lowest to the highest in the country (and on a par with faculty in Faculty of Arts) and breaking ground with the successful negotiation of annual research leaves (on top of sabbatical leaves) to support research and scholarship.
For academic librarians who are members of certified trade unions, the usual and logical union for them to belong to is the same union as faculty members. This is the situation at York and many other Canadian universities. Academic librarians are seen as sharing a community of interest with their faculty colleagues. “Community of interest” is used by labour boards to determine appropriate bargaining units in organized workplaces. Underpinning that determination is whether “employees in the unit share enough employment interests in common that the single bargaining agent can effectively represent all the interests of the collectivity. It does not mean an identity of interests, but a broad similarity of employment interests and an absence of seriously conflicting interests.”

This is a double-edged sword with both advantages and disadvantages. As a group, librarians are usually too few in number to wield much clout on their own, as is demonstrated by some troubling developments in Ontario that are described by several authors in this collection.

In most provinces, and in the federal jurisdiction, labour boards can amend bargaining unit certificates where they are persuaded of the community of interest of the groups concerned. However a recent Ontario Tory government amended the Labour Act to give the employer an effective veto to any such initiatives: the employer must agree to the broadening of a bargaining unit for the certificate to be amended.

Subsequently, two groups of academic librarians (Western and McMaster) have been forced to unionize as separate units, a move that is reported to have created a clear distinction between them and their faculty member colleagues and has weakened them in collective bargaining. However, the flip side of the coin is when librarians find themselves a minority group in a larger union, a situation which often gives rise to other difficulties. As Hovekamp writes,

“[t]he inclusion of academic librarians in the same bargaining unit with faculty has not come without a price. Often cited is the librarians’ minority status at the table of negotiations and the subsequent neglect of our own particular needs. Library professionals complain that they are frequently underrepresented and compromised during bargaining negotiations. Considering the sometimes significant differences in their job duties compared to other faculty, there is indeed the risk that librarians’ special interests may not get enough attention.”

Echoed by Harris,

“[I]n mixed units in which library workers are included with workers from a variety of different occupations, librarians often find that their interests are not particularly well looked after. In collective bargaining arrangements with universities, for example, librarians with faculty status are likely to comprise only a small percentage of the bargaining unit for academic employees . . . . As a result, their concerns are not likely to be taken up by the whole group.”
As described later in this chapter, this results in librarians finding themselves involved in two sets of negotiations when they participate in collective bargaining: one with the employer and another with their faculty bargaining team members.

**Collective Bargaining Process—Practices, Strategies and Experiences**

So, what does collective bargaining look like for academic librarians across Canada? Not surprisingly, the bargaining process varies from institution to institution. A collective bargaining survey was administered by the author in April 2013 to academic librarians via CAUT Librarians' listserv in an effort to “gather information regarding the structures and practices in place to support collective bargaining for academic librarians who are members of certified unions that include faculty members at universities in Canada,” as well as to “better understand the issues faced by academic librarians relating to collective bargaining, the challenges academic librarians encounter as members of faculty bargaining teams, and what strategies have proven successful at the negotiating table.” The survey was divided into two parts. The first part was comprised of 23 questions and was open to all respondents. The second part was comprised of 12 questions and was open to respondents who had served as members of their bargaining /negotiating team. A total of 140 responses were received. The majority of respondents (70.7%; n=53) reported having academic status (analogous terms and conditions of employment, including an equivalent system of ranks, and procedures for promotion and tenure as teaching faculty) as opposed to faculty status (same rights and privileges, ranks and salary as teaching faculty) (28%; n=21). Twenty six respondents indicated that they had served as members of their union’s bargaining /negotiating team. Of these 26 respondents, 6 indicated that they had served twice and four indicated that they had served three times or more.

**Librarian Bargaining Proposals**

The development of strong librarian bargaining proposals that are included in the broader primary negotiating positions is a critical first step in securing improvements for librarians in bargaining. The survey revealed that librarian bargaining proposals are solicited through a variety of means, with consultation with librarians (68.9%; n=51) being the most common, followed by bargaining surveys (59.5%; n=44), and open calls for proposals (45.9%; n=34). The responsibility for approval of all proposals usually falls to the union’s/association’s Executive/Board (39.7%; n=27), followed by the entire union’s/association’s membership (23.5%; n=16), with approval by librarians themselves appearing to being the least frequent (14.7%; n=10). Librarians have mixed success with respect to getting their proposals included in the primary negotiating positions brought forward for bargaining, with 59.5% (n=44) reporting sometimes, 23% (n=17) reporting yes, and 4.1% (n=3) reporting no success. It is self-evident that it is next to impossible to
achieve improvements for librarians when librarian proposals are not included in the primary negotiating positions. Survey respondents who had bargained reported that careful preparation of well thought out proposals, supported by strong arguments, and by all librarians, is critical to success in bargaining. All of this points to the need for organisation and preparation well in advance of the call for proposals. At York, librarians met over the course of a year, from 1990-91, with a senior member of the union staff to review the Collective Agreement with the view of identifying areas for improvement for librarians in the next round of bargaining where librarians saw significant gains.

Bargaining priorities for librarians appear to have changed over time. While salaries may have been one of the most important issues for academic librarians in the 1970s and 1980s (it certainly was at York), as illustrated in Table 1, survey results revealed that workload is now the most pressing issue, followed by pay equity/salary anomalies (indicating that salary is an ongoing concern). Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Most important bargaining priorities for librarians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workload - 65.1% (n=41)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pay equity/Salary anomalies - 50.8% (n=32)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research leaves - 38.1% (n=24)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuing appointment and promotion (criteria, standards, process, etc.) - 34.9% (n=22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical leaves - 33.3% (n=21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of work/flexible work week - 25.4% (n=16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic/faculty status - 22.2% (n=14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference travel grants - 19% (n=12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research grants - 12.7% (n=8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vacation - 12.7% (n=8)</td>
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</table>

issues of importance mentioned that are not included in the table below were governance, academic freedom, and assignment of duties. These concerns reflect the importance of bargaining in protecting the values of academic librarianship.

At York, it took many rounds of bargaining to achieve salary improvements, beginning in 1985, the first year that librarians went to the bargaining table with a proposal asking for salary parity with faculty. York University President Macdonald had agreed to implement the recommendations of the Stewart Commission, which provided for salary parity upon the adoption of continuing appointment and promotion criteria—but this was never realized. It wasn’t until 1987, when the Ontario government passed Pay Equity legislation that was designed to “redress systemic gender discrimination in compensation for work performed by employees in female job classes” that York librarians saw progress on this front. Directly as a result of the legislation, in 1995 the Employer finally agreed to a pay equity plan for librarians, which included a pool of funds to raise librarian salaries and to tie librarian salaries directly to faculty salaries with regularly mandated reviews. In 1998, librarians were also successful in inserting them-
selves into the Salary Adjustment Funds Exercise, which was intended to address salary inequities by arguing the principles of pay equity which had the effect of raising librarian salaries even closer to the faculty line. By the early 1990s, a small librarian complement, with ever increasing student enrolments had also pushed librarian workload issues to the fore. Librarians went to the table with numerous demands over successive rounds of bargaining, with workload being the most pressing. During this decade they were able to secure stronger language relating to workload as well as 19 days research leave (in 1992) on top of regular sabbaticals, which was framed as a workload issue. One of the most important gains secured (in 1999) was language relating to librarian complement, which offered a measure of protection against any future reduction of professional librarian positions. As well, it protected against the replacement of those positions by paraprofessional or other type of staff such as post-doctoral fellows, something which has been taking place at other universities such as McMaster despite increasing enrolments. It reads: “The Employer will approve, in a timely manner, a continuing stream position each time a professional librarian retires or resigns from employment during the term of the Collective Agreement, it being understood that the position need not necessarily be to replace the professional librarian who retired or resigned.”

Bargaining Team Selection and Composition

An important step in getting librarian proposals into collective agreements is to ensure that librarians are represented at the bargaining table as full members of the bargaining team. Survey respondents indicated that librarian proposals are, for the most part, bargained at the same time with faculty proposals (90.5%; n=67). A bargaining team appointed by the union/association Executive/Board is usually responsible for negotiating the agreement (75%; n=57), followed by bargaining team elected by the entire union/association membership (15.8%; n=12).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 2 Librarian membership on bargaining team</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Librarian is included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 43.1% (n=31)  Sometimes 44.4% (n=32)  No 9.7% (n=7)  Don’t know 2.8% (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated spot for librarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 25.7% (n=18)  n/a  No 52.9% (n=37)  Don’t know 21.4% (n=15)</td>
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</table>

However, as demonstrated in Table 2, a librarian is not always included on the bargaining team.

Including a librarian on a team is the result of usual/past practice (41.2%; n=7), or required by the Constitution & By-laws or other document (29.4%; n=5). The most common method of selecting the librarian member is appointment by
union/association Executive/Board (28.3%; n=17), followed by volunteer (26.7%; n=16), and then elected by union/association membership (13.3%; n=8). None of the respondents reported librarian members elected only by librarians. In the majority of cases, librarians participate in negotiating the entire agreement, with 8.8% (n=6) negotiating only librarian proposals. Most librarians indicated that having a librarian on the team influences the outcome of bargaining in a positive way (51.5%; n=34), followed by a significant number who did not know (40.9%; n=27), and then 7.6% (n=5) who indicated it did not. For those who have bargained, one of the most fundamental lessons learned is that it is virtually impossible to achieve improvements for a minority group in bargaining unless there is a member of that group at that table. It is also often the physical presence of that individual that prevents proposals from being abandoned or traded off in the final hours of bargaining. Securing a designated spot for librarians on the bargaining team is extremely important and may require proactive efforts on the part of librarians to modify existing union structures and governing documents.

Table 3 illustrates the areas where librarians believe they have benefited from collective bargaining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3 Areas that benefited from collective bargaining</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic/faculty status - 78.9% (n=56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing appointment and promotion (criteria, standards, process, etc.) - 77.9% (n=53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical leaves - 75.4% (n=52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation - 68.1% (n=47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research leaves - 60.0% (n=39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay equity/Salary anomalies - 58.8% (n=40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference travel grants - 47.7% (n=31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload - 38.2% (n=26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of work/flexible work week - 34.9% (n=22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research grants - 33.3% (n=20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced load - 27.7% (n=18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each of the questions posed in the first portion of the survey, there were a number of respondents who indicated that they did not know revealing a lack of understanding as well as a lack of engagement with the collective bargaining process. It is not uncommon for the same few individuals to share the burden of representing librarians at the faculty association/union level. While increased experience is very useful in bargaining, renewal is also important. There is a danger that too few will develop the necessary expertise to ensure that the interests of librarians continue to be represented when those experienced individuals retire or step back from union activities. Those newer to the institution may not fully
understand what was involved in securing the terms and conditions of employment they currently enjoy. Succession planning, including mentoring, and the sharing of knowledge are critical to both achieving improvements for librarians as well as protecting those gains already achieved. There always needs to be a group of librarians who are looking out for the interests of the collective and seizing opportunities as they arise.

**Bargaining Strategies and Experiences**

A number of factors contribute to the success or failure of librarian bargaining proposals and these can be unpredictable. Not only does bargaining vary from institution to institution but it can also vary from one round to the next within the same institution. The librarian member can feel valued and respected in one round of negotiations and marginalized and excluded in another. Significant gains can be achieved in one round of negotiations and nothing in the one that follows. Ironically, there may be in some instances no correlation between how a librarian feels she or he has been treated and the gains that were secured. Similarly the style of bargaining between the parties can vary, ranging from a contest of wills, punctuated by raw debate or calm, infuriating stonewalling. Whether a “given negotiation is a combination of these or whether one predominates depends on the climate, personalities involved, and financial situation within which bargaining takes place.”

Therefore, it is not uncommon for those who have served as a librarian member of a faculty bargaining team to have mixed feelings about the experience. The majority of the respondents who had bargained viewed it as positive (65.2%; n = 15), followed by mixed, both positive and not positive (30.4%; n = 7), with only 1 respondent reporting not positive. Table 5 below illustrates how librarians viewed their experiences as members of the bargaining team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4 Experience as member of bargaining team</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was treated with respect and accepted as an equal member of the Bargaining/Negotiating Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 84.0 % (n=21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contributions were valued by other members of the Bargaining/Negotiating Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 79.2 % (n=19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to speak my mind and express my views openly at the Bargaining/Negotiating table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 70.8 % (n=17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was treated with respect by the Employer/Administration at the Bargaining/Negotiating table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 70.8 % (n=17)</td>
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</table>
When asked to provide any additional comments relating to the experience of bargaining, much of what was offered reflects the experience and the lessons learned of others who have bargained. It is a rewarding exercise but one that is fraught with frustration and even anxiety, with the librarian often in a position of weakness. First, bargaining requires an incredible time commitment, which may be difficult to schedule within the structured work week of an academic librarian. As one respondent said, “[t]he time commitment is large since one serves in bargaining preparation twice as many hours as spent across the table. If bargaining is contentious spread over many months it takes an energy toll.” Second, “[b]eing treated with respect by faculty on a negotiating team is something that has to be actively earned—a librarian does start from a position of ‘inferiority’—i.e. an assumption of lower status—but if one works hard and offers good advice on THEIR issues, respect is earned, and once earned it is not lost.” Experience gained by participating in other union positions and activities can serve librarians very well in bargaining by providing them with an understanding of faculty issues and concerns, in some cases better than some of their faculty member bargaining team colleagues. That said, there are concerns relating to the longstanding issues of both gender and status, which can put the librarian at a disadvantage. CAUT describes collective bargaining as “fundamentally a power relationship.” The librarian can feel powerless vis à vis the employer but also in relation to his/her bargaining team colleagues. One respondent said, “[a]s a female I wasn’t always listened to, unless a male took up my point.” Another responded, “[e]ven though professors are very willing to have a librarian on the team, they—just because of their personalities, ego, etc. . . . —take up way more space than I do. They talk more, argue more, everything more. It’s just not my work style, so I feel as though I’m less respected because that’s just not my style.” And last, being in a minority on the team and representing a group that is a minority within a larger bargaining unit, one is confronted with the fact that the librarian issues may just not be that important to the membership. “[A] librarian issue was dropped to allow an agreement to be reached,” reported one respondent. Those who have bargained will appreciate the difficult moment of realization and feeling of powerlessness when a librarian proposal is about to be dropped.

While 79.2% (n=19) respondents reported that librarian proposals were treated as seriously as faculty proposals, 12.5% (n=3) indicated that some were, and 8.3% (n=2) indicated that they were not. Again, respondents’ comments provide valuable insights echoing the previous concerns.

- “On a number of occasions the librarians’ concerns were traded off for something else. So it takes a number of years for [results] to be achieved.”
- “There is a necessary weakness that results from people on both sides of the table knowing that the union as a whole will not go on strike for librarian issues. So, it is difficult to get full attention. If the librarians lobby the
union executive actively, persistently and noisily, however, the amount of
attention paid can be increased markedly."

• “Librarians’ issues were really only treated as seriously as other proposals
when they were specifically tied to professors. For example, we proposed
language re: Faculty : Student ratio AND Librarian : Student ratio. This
was treated equally because it was part of the same proposal. If the issue
was librarian-specific, it got a lot less attention from the group.”

When asked if they felt pressure to settle too soon or for less than they had
hoped for in bargaining, 69.6% (n=16) respondents said no, while 29.1% (n=6)
replied yes they had. One respondent writes, “[the] President of [the] union let
an inequity persist in order to reach an agreement.” Fisher and Ury make refer-
cence to the persuasive “siren song” of “let’s all agree and put an end to this” where
“you may end up with a deal you should have rejected.” The librarian, being in a
minority position, often feels pressured to just go along. Refusing to go along puts
the librarian in a difficult position but may be what is required for improvements
for librarians to be achieved at the bargaining table.

As is illustrated in Table 5, resistance on the part of Employers is perceived as
to be the biggest obstacle to achieving improvements for librarians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5 Obstacles to achieving improvements for librarians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resistance on the part of the Employer – 84.2% (n=16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from faculty members on the Bargaining/Negotiating Team – 21.1% (n=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from librarian colleagues – 21.1% (n=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of persistence on the part of the librarian on the Bargaining/Negotiating Team – 10.5% (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of preparation in advance of bargaining – 10.5% (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak proposals – 5.3% (n=1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Echoing the familiar theme of being a member of a minority group, an-
other respondent cited as an obstacle, “[p]riorities on what can be achieved at any
specific particular bargaining table. In other words, a change affecting all faculty
members (approximately 900-1,000 members) versus something specific for li-
brarians affecting only 35-40 people.” In the context of total compensation (the
cost of the entire package), it may be difficult to achieve significant gains if the
cost of those gains is greater than the librarian proportional share of the pack-
age. This is something that plays out in the university at large, where the library
often has to fight for its fair share of the “pie” in an environment of dwindling financial resources. It also appears that certain librarian proposals resonate more with faculty members, which may provide the conditions for gains to be achieved. One respondent reported, “our only controversial issue is vacation; librarians want more and faculty don’t care (since they can take a full term free of teaching—something librarians don’t have.)” Meanwhile, research leave was cited by several respondents as an issue that was supported by faculty members on the bargaining team. “The faculty members on the Team realized the necessity for Librarians to get research days.” These proposals may resonate in the same way with employers. At York, increased vacation was met with staff resistance during the same round of bargaining, in 2009, which saw librarians secure two additional research days (for a total of 22) as well as six half course releases (26 days/year) available annually on a competitive basis for librarians to pursue research and scholarship (on top of sabbaticals). The experience at York demonstrates that it is helpful to have more than one librarian proposal going into bargaining. It is impossible to predict which one may have success within any particular round. As respondents also relate, it can take many years to achieve progress with a particular issue.

With respect to the factors that contributed to achieving improvements for librarians at the bargaining table, as is illustrated in Table 6, support from faculty members on the Bargaining/Negotiating Team was cited as the most important factor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6 Factors contributing to achieving improvements for librarians</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support from faculty members – 81.8 % (n=18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence on the part of the librarian on the Bargaining/Team – 77.3% (n=17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation in advance of bargaining – 59.1% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong proposals – 45.5% (n=10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from librarian colleagues – 40.9% (n=9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness on the part of the Employer – 27.3% (n=6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strong support from faculty bargaining team members signals to employers the importance of librarian issues and the possibility that the lack of gains for librarians could prevent a settlement from being reached. Having a good chief negotiator was also cited as important. The style of the chief negotiator can vary considerably and can set the tone for bargaining. One chief negotiator may foster the notion of a team encouraging consensus in decision-making and where all, including the librarian, are seen as equal members. Another may adopt a bureaucratic efficiency, bestowing upon her- or himself executive powers and circumventing bargaining team members and even colluding with the employer. In some negotiations all members are encouraged to speak and participate; in others the chief negotiator acts as the principle spokesperson. The librarian can find her- or
himself the spokesperson for all librarian issues or in a position of having to communicate with and convince the chief negotiator so that librarian proposals can be communicated effectively. Success may hinge on how effective that communication has been. When asked specifically what were the strategies that proved most successful with respect to achieving improvements for librarians at the bargaining table, as is illustrated below, the most frequently cited were preparation and organization.

- “We used a stepped bargaining strategy which allowed us to explore positions prior to official bargaining. This was helpful in articulating our proposal.”
- “Having a member on the Bargaining team. Having a clear and consistent mandate from all Librarians over a number of years.”
- “The technique of having librarian ‘visitors’ in negotiating sessions for librarian clauses, as described above. Holding education sessions with the librarians at intervals to make them more aware of their rights under the C/A and where improvements need to be made. Having a separate librarian-appointed ‘proposals’ committee to feed proposals to the union proposals committee. Always having at least one librarian on the union executive, proposals committee, negotiating committee, and grievance committee. Preferably more than one, but at least one, always. Getting librarians to union meetings to act as a visible voting block, so the union executive knows they need the librarians to stay elected.”
- “Persuasive arguments and hard data.”
- “Having the librarians’ proposal or concerns well organized before the chief negotiator came to meet with the group.”
- “Preparation, preparation, preparation, and having very well thought out arguments.”
- “Our bargaining team was very willing to let the librarians on the team lead those discussions. We also consulted regularly with the entire librarian complement and were able to present well-grounded arguments in support of our position.”
- “Maintaining equivalent status with faculty/curators.”
- “Strong well written proposals/articles based on historical fact.”
- “Good examples from other institutions; drafting the language for the team; doing research.”
- “Bargaining alongside faculty seemed to result in more improvements. Previously librarians were always at a side table and we used to really get screwed there.”
- “Having a strong negotiating team.”
- “Made common proposal with members of other professions represented by the union.”
When asked about the greatest challenges experienced at the bargaining table, in addition to employer intransigence, respondents frequently mentioned the minority status of the librarian on the bargaining team.

- “Understanding the process of negotiation.”
- “Keeping my voice heard.”
- “You spend more time negotiating your position with your faculty team members than with the administration. They assume you are just like them, only inferior. They do not understand our issues unless you take a lot of time educating them on every clause. It takes a lot of time and patience and persistence, and it has to be done with every new negotiating committee. When they vote you down, you come back the next day with more information, documents, letters from colleagues etc. Wear them down, if necessary. You have to polite but very strong.”
- “Administration’s apathy and unwillingness to compromise on some issues and use of questionable librarian/archivist salary data to justify its position on salary increases.”
- “Trying to get 100% sabbatical pay for library department heads as is done for faculty chairs.”
- “Employer dragging feet and not necessarily following the bargaining rules set up at the beginning of the bargaining process.”
- “Because librarians had not brought forward proposals and we were not expecting administration to bring the sweeping changes they introduced (most of which we resisted successfully), we were initially unprepared to discuss librarians issues.”
- “Chairs on both sides kept having chats and coming back having given more than I certainly wanted them to: thus bargaining did not occur at the table (administration chair refused to commit himself to anything at the table and kept retracting advances that had occurred at the table); not being listened to.”
- “Outside of the discussions on the librarians’ articles, I felt that I didn’t have enough knowledge or experience to contribute very much to the issues surrounding faculty positions.”
- “Employer intransigence.”
- “So far, just being heard. Table dynamics as described above.”
- “People doing their best when not qualified to do the job. Intransigence on the part of Administration.”

The failure to see librarians as equals is a common refrain in the professional library literature. In their study of faculty perceptions of librarians at the University of Manitoba, Gaby Divas, Ada M. Ducas and Nicole Michaud-Oystryk found that “overwhelmingly librarians were seen as “professionals” with a “service” function. Activities such as research, teaching, and management received low ratings.”

“Separate but equal systems have never worked well in the profes-
sional world, nor do they seem to function any better in the academic environment,” writes Stephen E. Atkin. “The teaching faculty has had difficulty according equality to academic librarians, and it will not—unless a clear distinction is made between professional and nonprofessional activities. Otherwise, the relationship is the one described by the president of a university: ‘The teaching faculty view professional librarians as they do residence hall directors, counselors in the career center, or athletic coaches’.”

Harris points out that “[l]ibrarians who work in academic settings have been particularly likely to emphasize the importance of research as the key to gaining respectability and status. However, despite their efforts members do not regard their colleagues in the library as true academics or ‘real’ faculty, regardless of the number of articles they publish or their status in collective bargaining arrangements.” Librarians find themselves in a catch-22 situation with respect to “class conflict.” They need to negotiate provisions which will allow them to fulfill the criteria associated with faculty status, while simultaneously arguing that they are already meeting the criteria and are therefore entitled to the provisions. It is a paradoxical situation where librarians constantly need to prove themselves. This is the case despite it being true that, as Atkin points out, “[a]lthough the teaching faculty has the three responsibilities of teaching, research and service, significant portions of the faculty don’t teach, don’t conduct research, and don’t perform any service for their profession or the university.” In addition, a significant portion of teaching faculty (i.e., those in studio based programs), do not hold PhDs, which is often what is used to distinguish faculty from librarians. The key is education of faculty through engagement and participation. As Garcha and Phillips point out, “involvement in union activities expands knowledge of work teaching faculty is doing but also provides faculty with more insight and understanding of the kind of work [librarians] do and how valuable it is to them and the teaching and research missions of the institutions.”

When asked about lessons learned, better preparation was a common response as well as increased confidence and assertiveness on the part of the librarian member of the team.

- “Having confidence in understanding how negotiations play out is key for future participation.”
- “Better preparation. During the last round of bargaining some of our proposals were well thought-out and evidence based. But we could have done more. I thought that some of our proposals were so obvious and mutually beneficial that the Administration would readily agree to them. This was not the case.”
- “The team should be tougher overall next time. Stand up more around dragging of feet.”
- “Given that administration has signalled the likelihood that many of their previous proposals will come back in some form, we will be better prepared, perhaps with specific proposals of our own, or perhaps with counter proposals.”
• “Need unanimity from librarian members on a particular issue; difficult
to attain.”
• “Actually asking team why they aren’t listening to what I have to say; more
intransigence along with explanation (on their part) as to why they think
these moves are necessary; refuse to allow bargaining to NOT occur at the
table.”
• “I don’t think I would do anything differently. Maybe take a valium or
some other sedative before presenting librarians’ issues to keep from get-
ting all stressed out and taking things personally at the table.”

An opportunity was provided at the end of the survey for additional com-
ments, which were as follows.

• “As a Librarian I have been acclaimed as the Chief Negotiator in the up-
coming collective bargaining session . . . a very positive example of faculty
support for Librarians.”
• “Participating on the bargaining team was a very interesting and reward-
ing experience, if a bit stressful at times.”
• “ack. Horrendous process when administration is adversarial. There were 2
librarians on the Committee, one (male) was Chair of the Contract Com-
mittee and so appointed to Negotiating team where became co-Chair of
Negotiating team.”
• “We have a good contract in place. Other than funding merit awards, the
main issues are to defend what we have.”
• “Sometimes faculty aren’t as interested in advocating for librarian issues,
which is a bit discouraging.”
• “I’m in a smaller institution and the librarians have been part of the faculty
association since the mid-1990s. While we are certainly better off being
in the association our small numbers mean we are not a priority at the ne-
gotiating table. Still for a small staff, about half are on the sunshine list so
most members would say we do fine. We do not however, have sabbaticals
or research leave, and I for one, would like to fight for that, but am in the
minority on those issues. We have retirements coming up and I’m curious
if younger newer librarians will decide these are priorities and fight for
those clauses.”
• “Bargaining is an interesting process whereby I feel that librarians can
really prove themselves to faculty colleagues. It makes us partners, even
though we are a tiny group in the union. I am enjoying negotiations this
time for the most part and am hopeful for a positive outcome.”
• “In one round of negotiations a librarian was chief negotiator for the union
and the contract language was drafted by a librarian. In the cases where
there hasn’t been a librarian on the negotiating team, there was a librarian
on the executive.”
It is evident from the comments that, while librarians at some institutions are making progress on their issues, others are frustrated by the lack of support from faculty members. The number of respondents reporting that a librarian had served as chief negotiator, however, was an encouraging sign that demonstrates that librarians had, in some instances, not only secured an equal place at the table but also had earned a seat at the head of the table.

Conclusion

Catherine Coker, Wyoma van Duinkerken, and Stephen Bales offer the following strategies for academic librarians “seeking full citizenship” in the academy (these also emerged from the survey as being useful to librarians seeking to achieve improvements in collective bargaining).

If you share the conviction that academic librarians are not clerks but scholars, and thus deserving of full academic citizenship, consider the following:

1) **Organizing Effectively**: Become politically active through savvy organization . . .

2) **Educating Constantly**: Educating your teaching faculty colleagues, whether they consider you a colleague (yet) or not, as to the integral role of the librarian within the larger academic community . . .

3) **Participating Actively**: The previous steps may only be accomplished through consistent engagement in the life of the college or university . . .

Collective bargaining has proven a successful and powerful means of improving terms and conditions of employment for academic librarians. It requires proactive efforts on the part of librarians, including maintaining a high profile in union activities, organization and preparation, seizing opportunities when they arise, educating both faculty and librarian colleagues, changing union/association governing structures and documents (by-laws and constitutions), and a recognition that progress and gains may take many years. The importance of the stakes is posed by Spang and Kane:

Perhaps then, the relevant questions for academic librarianship today are: How do academic librarians themselves . . . see their present situation? What are they, as a professional group, willing to do to improve it? How will library and institution management view such efforts? . . . Constructive resolution of these questions can help to shape the identity of academic librarianship in the next century. Until then, who speaks for academic librarians? Administrators do. . .

And who speaks for librarians at the bargaining table?
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Chapter 10


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