

LIBRARIES WORK BECAUSE *WE* DO

THE PERSPECTIVES OF LIBRARY WORKERS AT THE TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Brandon Haynes

President, TPLWU Local 4948

Toronto Public Library Workers Union (TPLWU) – Local 4948 (CUPE)





TPLWU LOCAL4948

- Established April 21, 2009
- Approximately 2,200 members
- Members of CUPE (over 700,000 members across Canada)
- Largest public library local of CUPE in Canada
- Represent 50% of public library workers in Ontario
- Affiliations: Canadian Labour Congress, Toronto & York Region Labour Council
- Members of the Ontario Library Association, American Library Association



- *"I feel like with the under-staffing an issue across the entire system, TPL is rapidly losing the ability to deliver quality services to the public and we are losing focus on the real purpose of public library"*



TPLWU STRUCTURE

- Executive Committee
- Executive Board
- Health and Safety Officer
- Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Workplace Violence Prevention Sub-Group
- Modified Work Committee
- Joint Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee



EXECUTIVE BOARD

NORTH



SOUTH



EAST



WEST



NYCL



TRL



FACILITIES



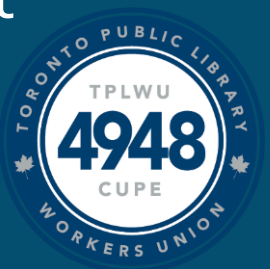
SUPPORT



BRIAN COCHRANE UNION EDUCATION FUND

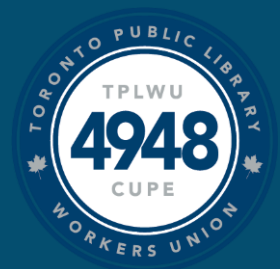


- Funds initiatives that will develop the leadership skills of future union leaders and activists, especially youth
- Board of Directors responsible for identifying opportunities and members who may benefit from this fund



LIBRARY WORKERS & THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

- Brandon Haynes is the Co-Chair of the CUPE National Library Workers Committee and representative for the province of Ontario
- Brandon is also the Chair of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council Municipal Committee, as well as the Municipal Election Planning Committee
- Jinkie David is the Treasurer for the Toronto & York Region Labour Council
- Camlin Vinayagamoorthy is the Chair of the Equity Committee (TYRLC)
- Jenna Liu is the Chair of the CUPE Ontario Library Workers Committee



LIBRARY WORKERS AND THE UNITED WAY



- Over \$2.5 million raised by City of Toronto workers
- Library workers represent about 5% of the workers at the City, but generally contribute more \$ to the campaign
- TPLWU Local 4948 donates \$5,000 annually to the Community Fund on behalf of its members

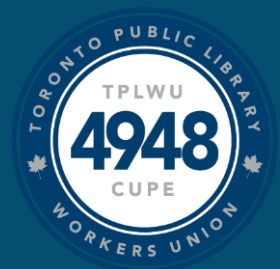
ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT / PRESENTATIONS

Academic Involvement

- Placement Student from Work & Labour Studies Program (York University)
- Faculty of Information (U of T)
- New Librarians Symposium (Guelph University)

Publishing / Presentations

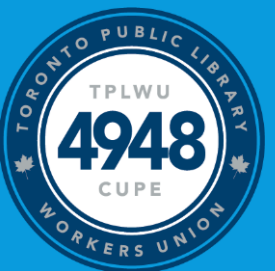
- Ontario Library Association Super Conference
- Washington Library Association Conference
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities annual conference
- Public Libraries magazine
- The Walrus magazine



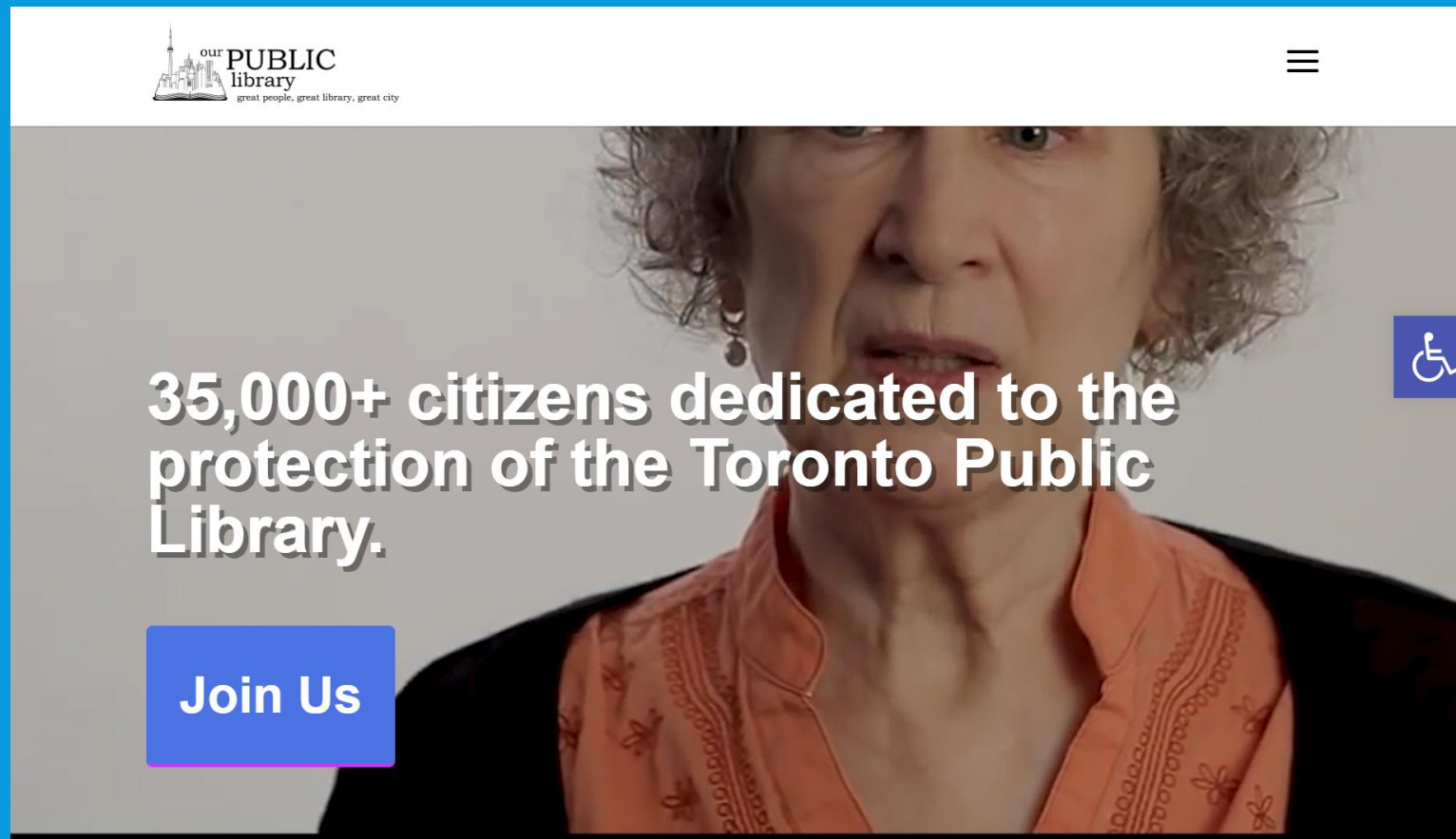
"I work a lot of extra hours to try to help full time staff who are becoming run down, sick and exhausted from understaffing"



- *"Our schedules can be exhausting, which in turn affects the quality of our service, to say nothing of what it does for morale. We want to work, and we want to do our jobs well, but tpl doesn't seem to want to let us."*



OURPUBLICLIBRARY.TO

A screenshot of the website OURPUBLICLIBRARY.TO. The header features the logo "our PUBLIC library" with a small graphic of the Toronto skyline and the tagline "great people, great library, great city". A hamburger menu icon is in the top right. The main banner shows a close-up of a woman with curly hair, wearing an orange patterned shirt. Overlaid on the banner is the text "35,000+ citizens dedicated to the protection of the Toronto Public Library." and a blue "Join Us" button. A small purple square with a white accessibility icon is on the right side of the banner.

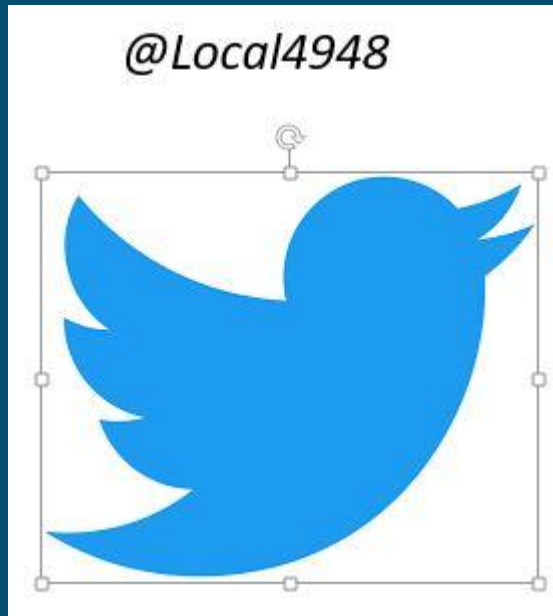
our PUBLIC library
great people, great library, great city

35,000+ citizens dedicated to the protection of the Toronto Public Library.

Join Us



SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE



MEET OUR MEMBERS

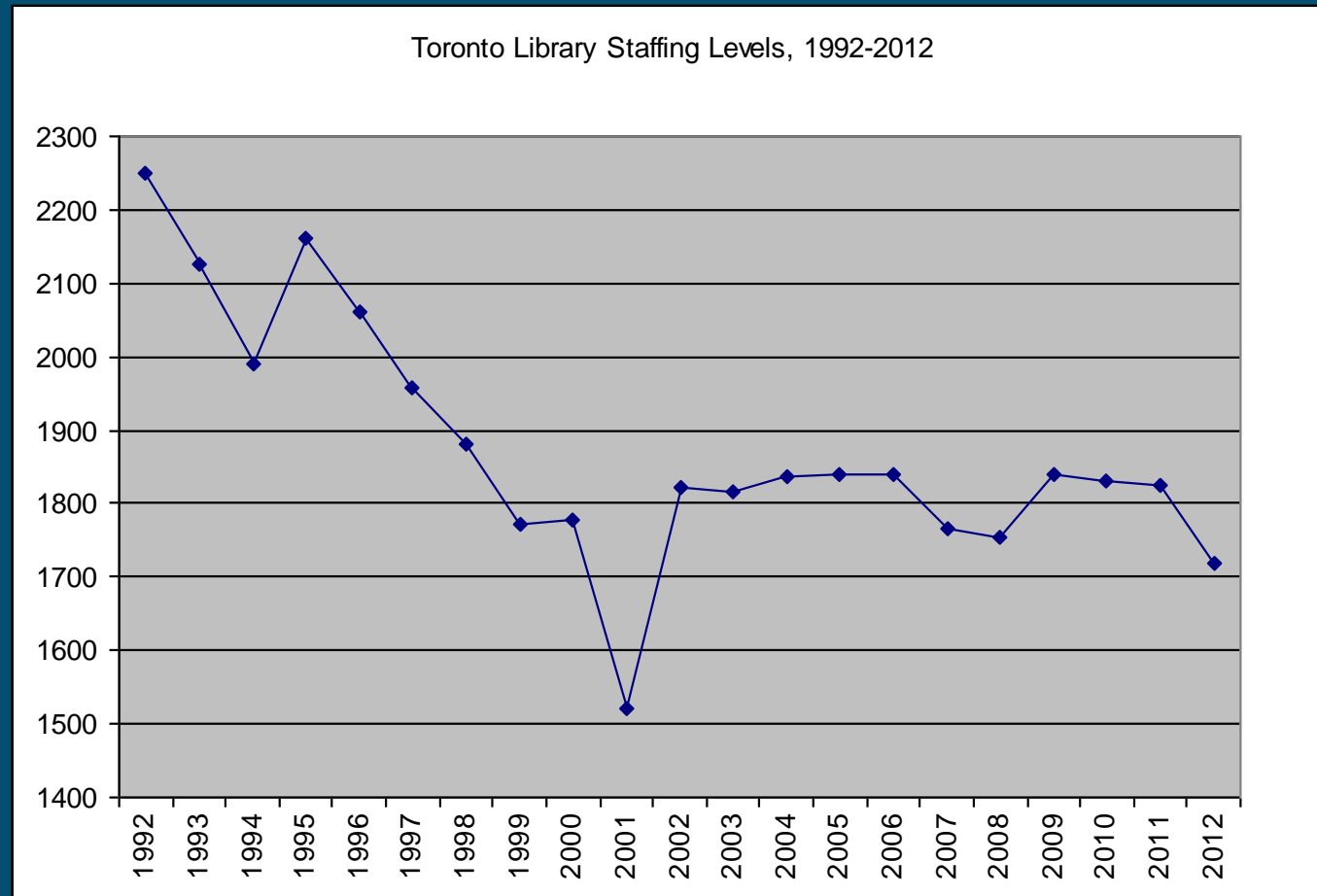


MEET OUR MEMBERS (CONT'D)

- 75% identify as women
- Almost half are part-time
- Largest classification is Pages
- Limited access to benefits, pensions, full-time employment
- Most identify as belonging to a visible minority
- Over 86% of library workers live in the city of Toronto



STAFFING



STAFFING

About 100 incidents of late openings / early closures of TPL branches since the beginning of 2022 have been attributed to low staffing levels.

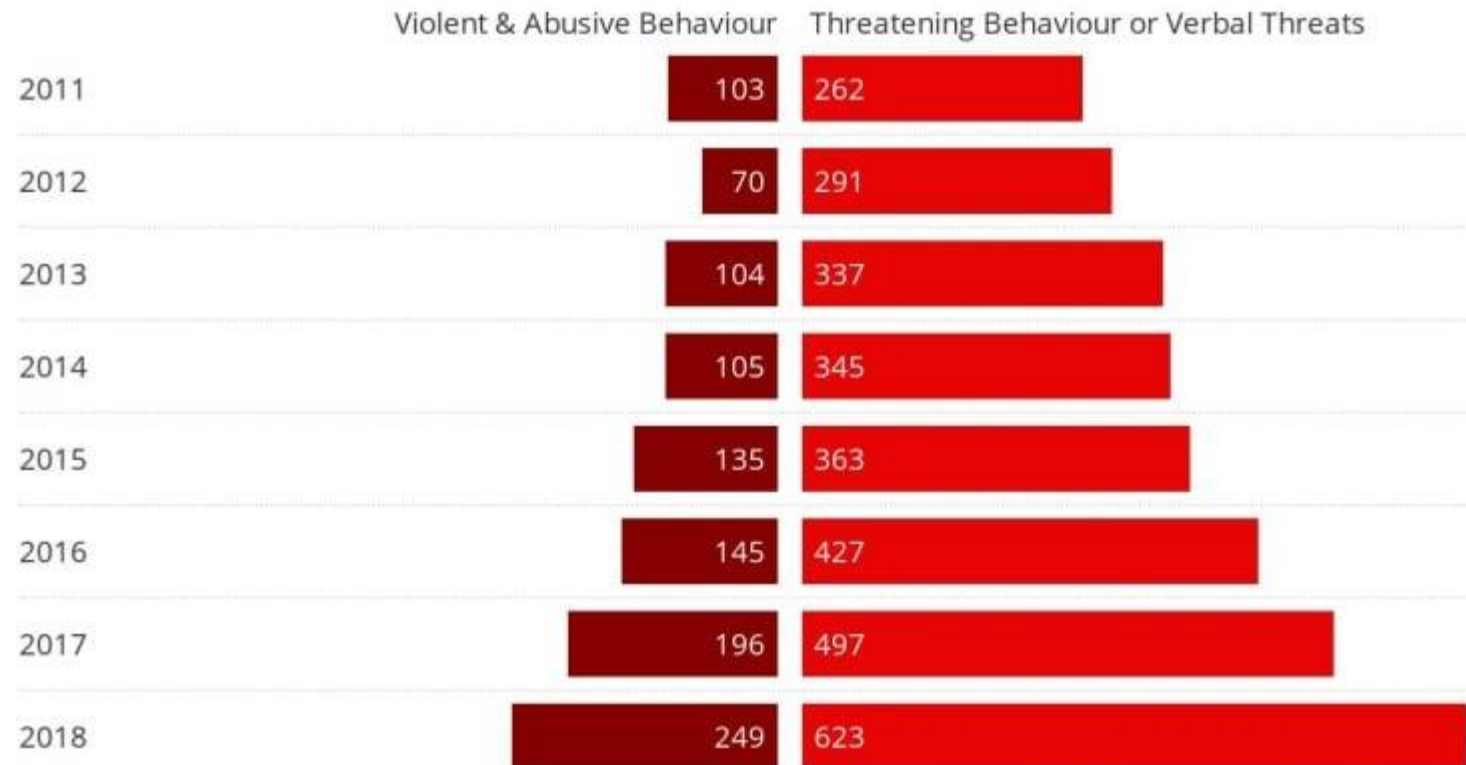


- *"Frequently, information desks in my location have to be closed as there is no one to staff them. How can an empty desk provide quality service?"*



HEALTH & SAFETY

Violence against librarians on the rise



Source: Toronto Public Library



The Current with Matt Galloway



Canadian libraries grapple with increase in violent incidents



Play Segment

23:20



Public libraries have seen an increase in violent incidents, with some installing metal detectors and security personnel. We discuss the balance of providing a public, yet safe, space for patrons and staff with three librarians: Paul Burry, director of the Prince George Public Library in B.C.; Pam Ryan, director of service, development and innovation at the Toronto Public Library; and Pilar Martinez, CEO of the Edmonton Public Library and the chair of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council's safety and security working group.

Aired: March 17, 2023

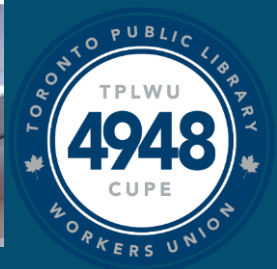


Why is there an increase of violence in Canadian public libraries?

FEATURES | APR 22

Experts say what's happening in our public libraries reflect what's going on in the community, where cuts to social...

Harrassment of Toronto Library workers is totally out of control



HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

LISTENING TO THOSE ON OUR FRONTLINES



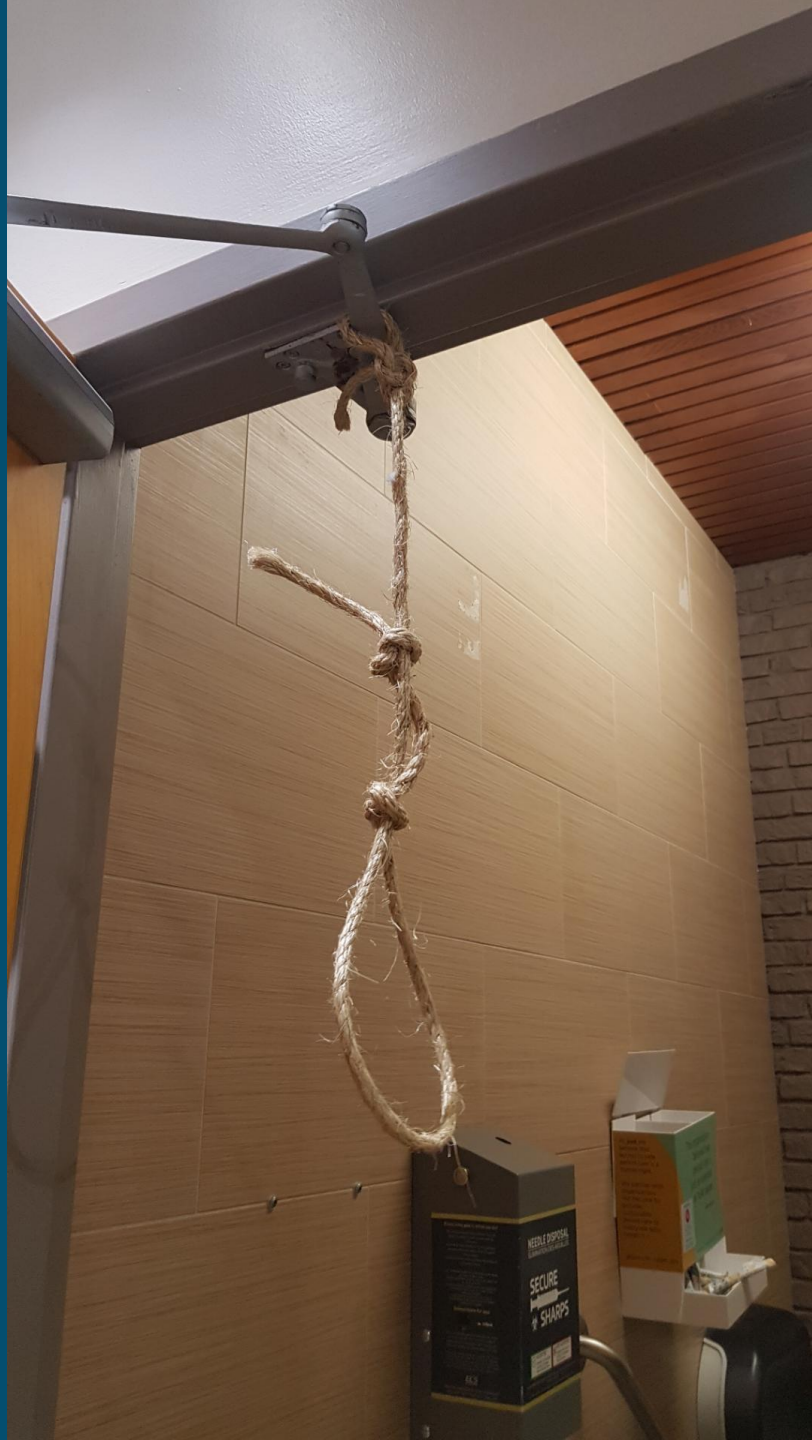
IMAGE CREDIT: ALEXSANDRA SUZI/ADOBE STOCK



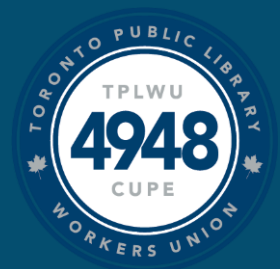
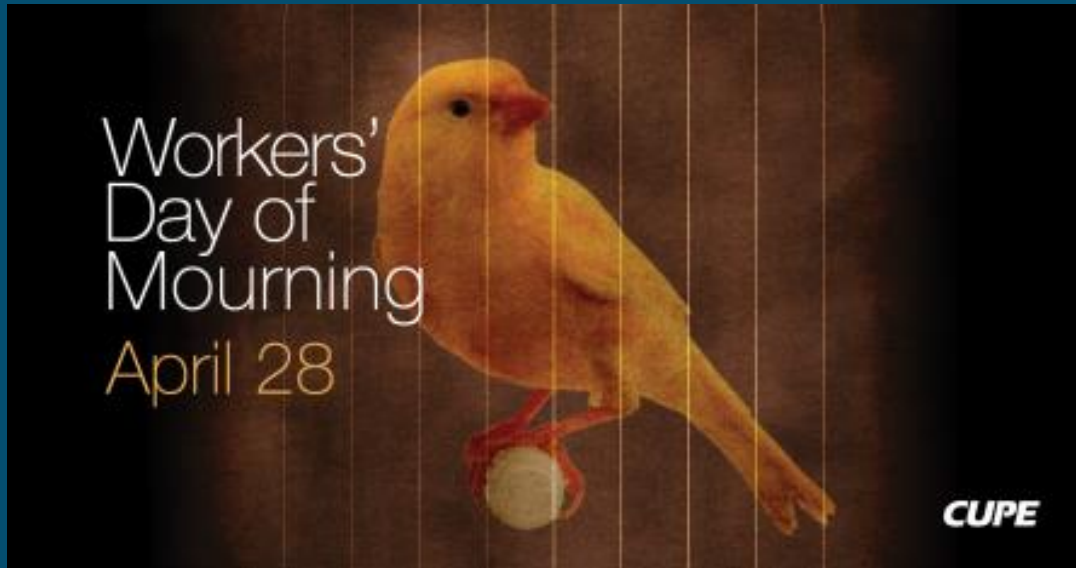
Siobhan Stevenson / siobhan.stevenson@utoronto.ca

Siobhan Stevenson, PhD, is Associate Professor, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto.

 Siobhan is currently reading *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt.



NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING



PRECARIOUS WORK



OTHER ISSUES FACING LIBRARY WORKERS

- Career paths
- Elimination of Full-Time positions and increase of precarious work
- Increased use of self-service technologies
- Retail model vs. service model
- Loss of meaningful interaction with library users (disruption of connection with community and negative effect on job satisfaction)

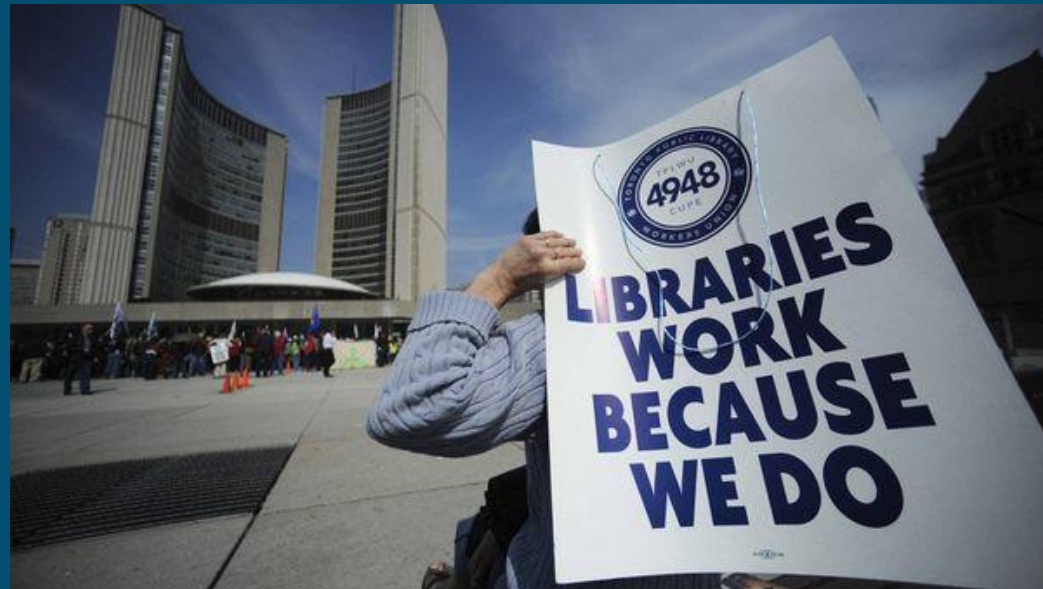


SOLUTIONS

- TPL as a “good employer”
- More staff to ensure safe workplaces and excellent public service
- Culture that addresses a solution for the number of violent and harassing incidents
- Addressing the effects of years of understaffing and cuts to library services
- “Made-in-TPL” approach
- Re-investment



LET'S START THE CONVERSATION...



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