



# THE INSTRUCTOR

Spring 2018

## Welcome

Karen Harper, Communications Officer

Hello CUPE 3912 members! There is a lot going on in this newsletter, and especially a lot of good news! We have just set up our first scholarly contributions display in the libraries of Saint Mary's and Mount Saint Vincent University, with plans for Dalhousie University this week. For bargaining, we have reached an agreement with Dalhousie University; part-time instructors at Dal should take note of how to claim their back pay (see instructions in this newsletter). We will start bargaining at Saint Mary's University in the next few months (when I will finally get to be at the bargaining table). On a personal note, an essay I wrote on part-time instructors doing research was published in the CAUT bulletin last week. And we have much to look forward to at our Annual General Meeting coming soon with results of our recent survey (the start of our mobilization campaign) and many opportunities for CUPE 3912 members to become more involved. And now that spring might actually be here, there's a rumour that we might have another family picnic coming soon! See you at the AGM on April 13<sup>th</sup>!

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## Annual General Meeting

- When?** Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm
- Where?** Loyola Private Dining Room (L298)  
Saint Mary's University
- What?** Come for updates on negotiations and activities, elections of executive officers and delegates to national and international events, results of our survey, and votes on motions that will affect future CUPE 3912 negotiations and activities.
- Who?** All CUPE 3912 members welcome

AGM

## Bargaining Update!

The **Mount Saint Vincent University** and **Dalhousie University** collective agreements are now ratified and signed. For more details, see our website (3912.cupe.ca).



Dates are being set for bargaining at **Saint Mary's University** (SMU). The SMU Bargaining Committee is composed of: Karen MacKenzie, Steve Cloutier, Phil Bennett (VP SMU), Karen Harper (Communications Officer), and Julie Quinn.

### Notice about Back Pay for Dalhousie members

CUPE 3912 is pleased to announce that CUPE 3912 and Dalhousie University signed a new Collective Agreement on 23 March, 2018. The new agreement is in effect from September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2020.

CUPE 3912 members who had a part-time teaching contract at Dalhousie during the period of the new Collective Agreement are eligible for back pay (i.e., the difference in salary paid and the new salary levels in the Collective Agreement). As per the agreement ratified by the membership, there will be no back pay for Teaching Assistants for the semesters between September 1, 2016, and ending on August 31, 2017.

Part-time instructors who are eligible and who have a current contract will get back pay in their April pay cheque. Those who are eligible and who do not have a current contract will have to request back pay. They should contact Marlo Shinyei, [marlo.shinyei@dal.ca](mailto:marlo.shinyei@dal.ca), to arrange payment of their back pay.

As per the agreement ratified by the membership, members have 30 days from the signing of the agreement to request back pay. This means that the last day the Employer will accept these requests is May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

### Did You Know?

**More than 1/4**

of CUPE 3912 members that responded to the survey have been teaching part-time for **more than 7 years**

Come to the AGM and learn more about the results from the survey

If you have precedence, you can apply for professional development **\$\$\$** to attend conferences.

For more info, contact your CUPE 3912 VP

## Report on Fair Employment Week

By Annick MacAskill

CUPE 3912 participated in the Canadian Association for University Teachers (CAUT) - sponsored “Make It Fair” campaign this year by organizing two discussions for Fair Employment Week (Oct. 23-27, 2017).

The overall theme for the discussions was “**Voices for Change: Share our stories to inform future action**”. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend one of the two discussions, “**Research and Supervision**”, which was hosted by CUPE 3912’s own Karen Harper on the SMU campus. This was one of the first union events I attended since starting work as a part-time faculty member at SMU in September 2017.

In her presentation on the challenges contract academic staff (CAS) face when it comes to maintaining an active role in research, Karen discussed both the principles behind CAUT’s “Make It Fair” campaign, which focuses on the unfair working conditions faced by CAS, as well as her own career path. I was impressed to hear about Karen’s continued involvement in research as an ecologist and was happy to hear that it is still possible for contract academic staff working in the sciences to receive funding from the NSERC to fund their research.

Unfortunately, I do not know of any part-time faculty members in the humanities who receive grants to fund scholarly activities. In my experience, contract academic staff in arts and humanities departments have neither the time nor the financial resources to pursue research. This is obviously disappointing, as it limits our level of engagement with our disciplines, which in turn affects our teaching. It was interesting to discuss these differences with other CUPE 3912 members during the discussion period that followed Karen’s presentation.

*Photo: Karen Harper (left) and Annick MacAskill (right) model CAUT Make It Fair t-shirts in English and French.*



Check out **Karen Harper’s** commentary on the full-time demands of “part-time” academic work published in CAUT’s March Bulletin titled: “**Working Part-time in Name Only**” at

<https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2018/03/commentary-working-part-time-name-only>

# Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

Our National Voice

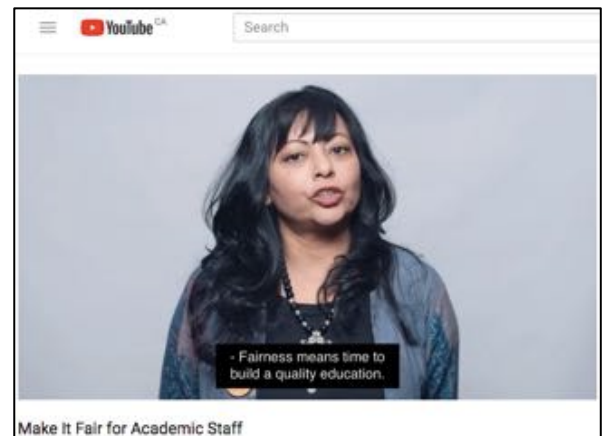


In 2015, CUPE 3912 became a member organization of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), an organization of faculty unions and organized groups of part-time instructors in Canada. CAUT is the 'national voice for academic staff' and an 'outspoken defender of academic freedom' ([www.caut.ca](http://www.caut.ca)). CAUT helps its members by assisting in collective bargaining, providing legal support, conducting research on relevant issues and lobbying government. Although most member organizations are faculty unions, many of the current issues considered by CAUT focus partly or entirely on contract academic staff (CAS). CAUT fights for 'fair working conditions, compensation and benefits that foster quality teaching and innovative research'. CAUT has two council meetings per year with delegates from all member associations including CUPE 3912.

In 1999, CAUT established a CAS committee, whose aim is to promote CAS issues within and outside CAUT, and to provide support and a forum to share information. Membership of the CAS committee varies but CUPE 3912 has a permanent committee member because we are one of the member associations with the largest number of CAS. We have two meetings per year in Ottawa and monthly online meetings. We discuss issues relevant to CAS across the country and provide updates from our local unions. I got the idea of our contributions displays from a CAS committee meeting. I find it quite interesting to learn about the similarities and differences in CAS experiences across the country, particularly how some CAS are part of faculty

unions whereas others such as CUPE 3912 have their own representation. The committee hosted the CAS conference in Toronto in October.

Membership in CAUT is very beneficial to CUPE 3912 as it provides resources and assistance to all its members such as for negotiations and communication. CAUT came to Halifax to give two workshops for our members on collective bargaining and communications. CAUT helped us with the survey and will continue to assist as we move forward with improving our internal communication and endeavors to increase active participation among our membership. CAUT can continue to help us in many ways, particularly in reassuring us that we are not alone in our endeavor to fight for fair working conditions and by providing support on a national level.



Check out CAUT's "Make It Fair for Academic Staff" video on Youtube

If you are interested in knowing more about CAUT and the CAS committee, please visit their website ([www.caut.ca](http://www.caut.ca)) or contact me.

*Karen Harper  
Communications Officer & CAUT CAS  
committee member*

## **The History of the EWOC**

### CUPE 3912's New Mascot?

In its search for a new logo and mascot, CUPE 3912 is considering reviving the EWOC, a cuddly teddy bear based on the “ewok” species in Star Wars, designed to represent the Dalhousie Education Workers Organizing Committee (EWOC) in 1992. The Dalhousie EWOC would later become CUPE 3912 when its parent organization, the Canadian Union of Education Workers (CUEW), decided to merge with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in 1995.

The EWOC mascot honours the origins of our local and the ongoing struggle for better working conditions for Halifax’s contract academic staff. At this point, CUPE 3912 is still deciding on a logo to accompany this new mascot.

We invite suggestions from members, which can be sent to Karen Harper at [communications.cupe3912@gmail.com](mailto:communications.cupe3912@gmail.com).

*Annick MacAskill  
Newsletter & Education Committee*



## **Mayworks Halifax**

### A Celebration of Workers and the Arts

Mayworks Halifax is an annual multi-disciplinary arts festival that annually celebrates International Workers' Day, or May Day (May 1<sup>st</sup>), through a series of cultural events open to the general public. Over the last eight years, Mayworks Halifax has become Nova Scotia’s largest labour and social justice themed cultural festival. Every month of May, our festival celebrates the history and contemporary conditions of working people in Nova Scotia through theatre, dance, visual art, film and music. Over a thousand audience members drawn to issues of social, economic and environmental justice are drawn to the festival year after year.



Our province has a rich heritage of labour struggles that have defined working class culture in our country, pioneered the advancement of workers' rights, and played an instrumental role in building the Canadian

labour movement. Our festival pays homage to famous human endeavours such as the difficult strikes led by the miners and steel workers of Cape Breton, or the inspiring cooperative movement born out of Antigonish. But Mayworks also challenges narrow conceptions of working class culture and stereotypes of white men in hard hats. Our festival depicts workers as complex and diverse, and yet containing common experiences, values and desires for fairness and justice. While we honour our heritage, we do not simply revere it with nostalgia. We engage with it critically and juxtapose it to present day challenges faced by the Nova Scotian workers of today. We don't shy away from highly marginalized issues such as the examination of working conditions in the sex industry, or from contentious programming such as bringing to stage former prison inmates to reflect on their lives as a means to reconcile with their communities. We do this in partnership with a dozen union partners in this celebration of Nova Scotia's working class.

The 2018 Mayworks Halifax Festival will feature a wide range of events including:

- ***In Full View*** – a photography exhibit by Tina Roberts-Jeffers bringing attention to the unpaid domestic labour of women, with a focus on Black women.
- ***In My Soul*** – a musical event featuring African Nova Scotian singer-songwriters paying homage to acapella group Four the Moment.
- ***It's A Girl!*** – a one woman show by Michelle Raine about trans identity and the language of gender identity emerging

more broadly into our society.

- ***Heavy*** – a one man show by Taylor Olsen about body image, eating disorders and mental health in the world of toxic masculinity.
- ***Stand With Water*** – a pair of dance pieces by Lilion Quarmyne that examine our relationship to water and struggles to protect it. Together, the pieces examine fights to protect water in Ghana, as well as the struggle to protect the Shubenacadie River against Alton Gas here in Nova Scotia.
- ***The True Cost of Coal*** – a storytelling of resistance against coal mining corporations in the Appalachian range shedding light on the interconnections of labour and indigenous struggles. Large banners created by the Beehive Collective serve as the visual backdrop to the stories accompanied by lyrical narratives performed by hip hop group Test Their Logik.

***Sébastien Labelle*** is an occasional Teaching Assistant in the theatre and film studies programs of the Fountain School of Performing Arts at Dalhousie University. After graduating from Dalhousie's theatre program, Sébastien became involved in CUPE 3912 and joined its executive as Communications Officer for the years 2013-2014. He was later elected as VP for Culture at the Halifax-Dartmouth & District Labour Council where he began his involvement with Mayworks Halifax. He is now the Festival Director for Mayworks Halifax in addition to being the Executive Director of the Bus Stop Theatre Co-op and a regular actor on stage and off.

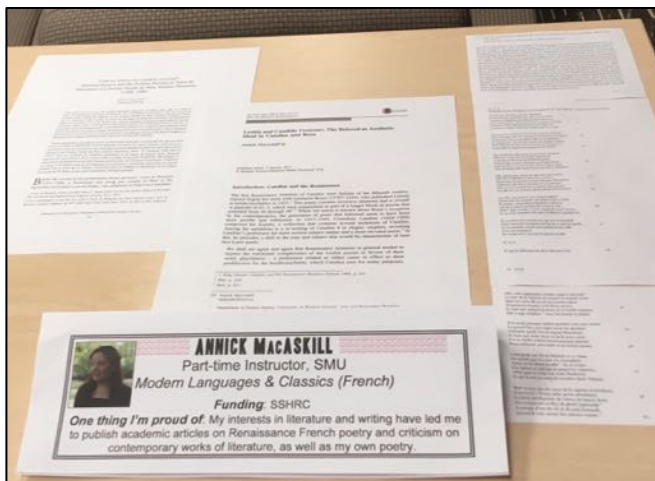
## Scholarly Contributions Displays

We are organizing displays of our scholarly contributions at the university libraries. The displays include publications and other scholarly material from part-time instructors and other CUPE 3912 members.

The purpose is to highlight the academic achievements of part-time instructors and

therefore raise awareness. Books, book chapters, journal articles and non-refereed publications are being displayed for the month of April at SMU, MSVU, and DAL libraries.

Please visit our displays and tell others!



The bookshelf portion of our display at SMU library (top left), put together by (top right, from left to right): Dave Banoub, Karen Harper, Bonita Squires.

Display (at left) exhibiting samples of three contributions for member Annick MacAskill.



## Opportunities for CUPE 3912 Members

Karen Harper, Communications Officer

There are plenty of opportunities available to all CUPE 3912 members.

At the AGM, we will vote on sending delegates to the Atlantic Regional Workers' Summit, the CUPE Nova Scotia Annual Convention in late May, the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL) conference in San José this summer and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Council Meeting in November.



The Workers' Summit is offered by the Canadian Labour Congress – Atlantic Region (<http://sms.clc-ctc.ca/workerssummit.html>).

COCAL is a network of North American activists working to improve higher education through the collective achievement of job

reliability, livable wages, academic freedom, and time and resources for academic research and professional development for contingent academic laborers'; see <http://cocalinternational.org/> for information about the conference.



There are frequent opportunities to attend meetings, conferences or workshops, and to join committees for organizations for which we are a member such as CUPE, CAUT and the Labour Council.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact me at:

[communications.cupe3912@gmail.com](mailto:communications.cupe3912@gmail.com)



### Who are the ~3,000 members of CUPE local 3912?

- part-time faculty at Dalhousie, Saint Mary's and Mount Saint Vincent Universities, including clinical instructors and lab demonstrators
- teaching assistants and markers/demonstrators at Dalhousie University
- instructors at the TESL Centre at Saint Mary's University

#### CUPE 3912

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