

Academic freedom and the Liberal Arts Librarian Meghan Dowell (Beloit College, Wisconsin)

There are many historical norms in librarianship; this paper will focus on two. One is surrounding neutrality in librarianship and the other is inconsistent categorization of academic librarians at their institutions. This case study will use Kandiuk and Sonne de Torrens' research as a guide to reproduce their work with a liberal arts lens and ask liberal arts librarians to pause to consider their role within academia. The aim of this case study is to investigate how academic librarians at liberal arts colleges in the United States define and understand academic freedom as it applies to their work within the library. The paper will first unpack historical changes around academic and intellectual freedom in librarianship and how the first amendment has been applied at various workplaces. Then data obtained through a combination of questionnaires and interviews with librarians at liberal arts colleges will be interrogated to fully understand how or if academic freedom applies to them, with regard to the number of years in the profession, their institutional employment classification, how they view their classroom and reference interactions, among others.