

## Which Side Are You On?: Seven Social Responsibility Debates in American Librarianship, 1990-2015

Elaine Harger



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Shattering any idea that librarianship is a politically neutral realm, this insider's account of seven debates from the floor of the American Library Association Council illustrates the mechanisms the governing body used to maintain the status quo on issues like racism, government surveillance and climate change. At play in each debate are rules of parliamentary procedure, appeals to authority, denial, and chastisement of librarians who pushed the ALA to make real its commitments to human rights and social justice. Providing a fascinating look at the Council's inner workings, the author parses debates concerning anti-apartheid boycotts; partnerships between ALA, McDonald's and the Boy Scouts of America; spying by the National Security Agency; censorship in Israel and the Occupied Territories; fossil fuel industry divestment; and the recent revival by ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom of the infamous film The Speaker.

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