

A Blank Page

Kenneth J. Varnum

Nothing is as daunting as a blank page, particularly now. As I sat down to write this issue's letter, I was struck by how much fundamental uncertainty is in our lives, so much trauma. A blank page can emphasize our concerns that the old familiar should return at all, or that a new, better, normal will emerge. At the same time, a blank page can be liberating at a time when so much of our social, professional, and personal lives needs to be reconceptualized and reactivated in new, healthier, more respectful and inclusive ways.

We are collectively faced with two important societal ailments. The first is the literal disease of the COVID-19 pandemic that has been with us for only months. The other is the centuries-long festering disease of racial injustice, discrimination, and inequality that typifies (particularly, but not uniquely) American society.

While some of us may be in better positions to help heal one or the other of these two ailments, we can all do something in both, as different as they are. Lend emotional support to those in need of it, take part in rallies if your personal health and circumstances allow, and advocate for change to government officials at all levels from local to national. Learn about the issues and explore ways you can make a difference on either or both fronts.

I hope I am not being foolish or naive when I say I believe the blank page before us as a society will be liberating: an opportunity to shift ourselves toward a better, more equitable, more just path.

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To rephrase Humphrey Bogart's Rick Blaine in *Casablanca*, "it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people library association divisions don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world." But despite the small global impact of our collective decision, I am glad our ALCTS, LLAMA, and LITA colleagues chose a united future as [Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures](#). Watch for more information about what the merged division means for our three divisions and this journal in the months to come.

Sincerely,

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