

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

November 2018

Kentucky discusses *All The King's Men*

by Margaret Gabriel, editor

On Oct. 16, Kentucky Humanities hosted the Lexington discussion of *All The King's Men* by Robert Penn Warren. The program was one of five "Democracy and the Informed Citizen" discussions that used the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel to generate conversations on contemporary populism, political discourse and their relation to journalism. In addition to Lexington, discussions were held at Northern Kentucky University, and in Louisville, Bowling Green, and Paducah.

The Lexington event at the Carrick Theater on the campus of Transylvania University began with a staged reading of *All The King's Men*. The novel, by one of Kentucky's most acclaimed writers, tells the story of the political rise and fall of Willie Stark, described as a libertarian populist.

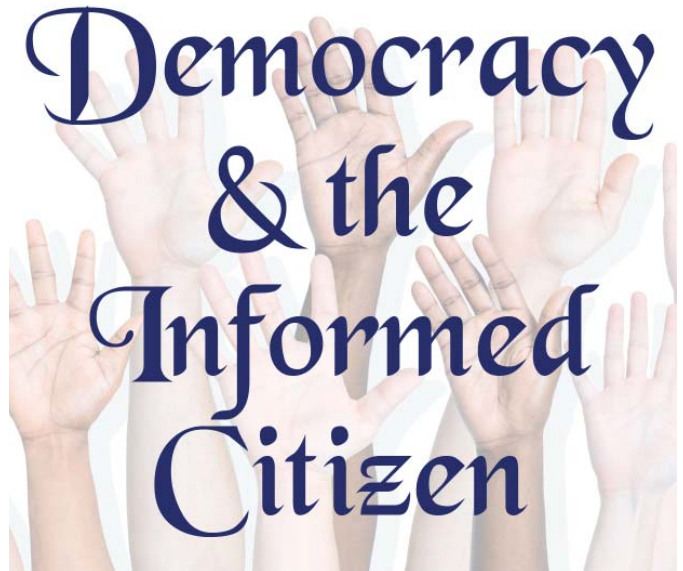
After the one-hour reading, the panel of Linda Blackford, education and investigative reporter for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*; Michael Cairo, associate dean for academic affairs and professor of political science at Transylvania; Jim Gray, Lexington mayor; and Maurice Manning, professor of English and writer-in-residence at Transylvania, discussed Warren's novel, using it as a prism for the current state of politics and journalism and the need for an informed citizenry.

The effect of social media and its impact

on journalism was something that Robert Penn Warren could not have imagined, Cairo said. Blackford said that social media has nearly destroyed newspapers, a key leg of democracy.

The confusion often created by social media can cause us to ask how we are able to define truth, Manning said.

Following the panel's comments, the audience was invited to enter the discussion. The first questioner asked if Willie Stark was correct: Is corruption necessary to progress? Manning brought up recent allegations in *The New York Times* concerning fraud and tax evasion as related to President Donald Trump's fortune, and said "Willie Stark is the real deal. Someone



making something of himself out of nothing is part of our national history."

Additional discussions of *All the King's Men* will take place at the Hindman Settlement School on Nov. 10; at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Lexington on Jan. 3, 2019; and at the Fulton County Public Library Jan. 14. For more information see kyhumanities.org.

Poor People's Campaign co-chairs to speak in Lexington Nov. 2

Rev. Dr. William Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis will speak at the Kentucky Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival at 7 p.m. on Nov. 2. The event, planned for just a few days before the mid-term elections, is designed to bring attention to people who are often left out of the electoral process in the United States. The website of the Action Network says "[Politicians] will learn about the power of a new and unsettling force that is organizing across this country, and they will hear our demands!

"We will not let another election cycle go by where politicians can run for office without talking out systemic racism, including voter suppression, the attacks on

immigrant and native communities, and the mass criminalization and incarceration of our communities; without talking about systemic poverty and the necessity of programs of social uplift; without talking about the war economy and ecological devastation that are blighting our people and the places we live; without talking about the distorted moral narrative that ignores the needs of the people."

The event is planned at Total Grace Church, N. Limestone Street, Lexington. The program will also include Bishop John Stowe, OSF, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Lexington; Rabbi Moshe Smolkin, Ohavay Zion Synagogue; and Damon Muhammed of the Nation of Islam.

Gun Violence In America as of 10-26-18 (excluding suicide)

2018 (year to date)

Killed 11,941
Wounded 23,260

2017 (annual)

Killed 15,612
Wounded 31,217

Source: www.gunviolencearchive.org

KFTC organizer registers hundreds of Kentucky voters

by Margaret Gabriel, editor

Tayna Fogle, an organizer apprentice for Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC), is passionate about voting and voter registration. She describes the efforts that have been made toward registration in the months leading up to the 2018 mid-term elections as “fantastic.”

In an effort to register as many people as possible to vote in the mid-term elections Nov. 6, Tayna has visited neighborhood association meetings, the LexTran Transit Center in downtown Lexington, high school football games, and the Catholic Action Center with the needed forms for voter registration. She set up a table in the Platinum Cuts Barber Shop, which she described as “A really good location to engage people in discussion.”

Two big voter registration campaigns took place on the campuses of the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University.

Although Kentucky offers on-line voter registration at elect.ky.gov, Tayna has learned that sending people to a website does not necessarily mean they will take the needed steps for registration. She finds that personal contact is a more effective way to engage people in the democratic process.

Tayna has canvassed door-to-door, paying particular attention to neighborhoods of people of color and estimates that KFTC has registered 5,200 people in the last few months. Asking “Are you registered to vote?” leads her to conversations that can be very revealing.

“If people say ‘no,’ I ask why,” Tayna said. People often tell me they don’t think their vote will make a difference, but when people tell her they don’t believe their vote counts, she begins a series of questions.

“Do you have children? Do you think your street is safe? Would you like to see any changes in Lexington’s schools?” The answers to these questions and many others have engaged Tayna in what she calls enriching conversations. As a result, she has made people begin to realize that the first step in making changes they believe are needed is using their voice in the voting booth. But while voting might be their first step, Tayna says her first step is listening; and some of the people she meets have never met anyone who listened to their concerns.

At the Catholic Action Center, Tayna has helped people change their registration because their address or their name has changed. Others, she said, are not registered because they are convicted felons. Tayna is a former felon who, like them, had lost her right to vote. In 2006, though, she learned about the process to regain those rights and worked through what she describes as a needlessly complicated process and personally walked her application for restoration of voting rights to the governor’s office in Frankfort.

Kentucky is one of only four states that does not automatically restore voting rights when a felon has completed his or her sentence. Tayna believes that the simple process of voting gives every person a sense of ownership in the community and is working to change that policy in Kentucky.

*Afflict the comfortable;
give comfort to the afflicted.*

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

Board of Directors: Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, Rick Clewett, Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Rabbi Uri Smith, Teddi Smith-Robillard, Craig Wilkie.

Peaceways Staff: Margaret Gabriel (editor); Penny Christian, Gail Koehler, Betsy Neale, Mary Ann Ghosal, Jim Trammel (proofreaders). The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of CKCPJ.

Member Organizations: ACLU-Central Kentucky Chapter; Ahava Center for Spiritual Living; Amnesty International, UK Chapter; Bahá’ís of Lexington; Berea Friends Meeting; Bluegrass Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program; Bluegrass United Church of Christ; Catholic Action Center; Central Christian Church; Commission for Peace and Justice, Catholic Diocese of Lexington; Gay and Lesbian Services Organization; Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky; Hunter Presbyterian Church; Islamic Society of Central Kentucky; Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass; Kentuckians for the Commonwealth; Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Central Kentucky Chapter; Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights; Kentucky Resources Council; Lexington Fair Housing Council; Lexington Fairness; Lexington Friends Meeting; Lexington Hispanic Association (Asociación de Hispanos Unidos); Lexington Labor Council, Jobs with Justice Committee; Lexington Living Wage Campaign; Lexington Socialist Student Union; Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church; Newman Center at UK; North East Lexington Initiative; One World Film Festival; Students for Peace and Earth Justice (Bluegrass Community and Technical College); Peacecraft; The Plantory; Progress (student group at Transylvania University); Second Presbyterian Church; Shambhala Center; Sustainable Communities Network; Union Church at Berea; Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington; United Nations Association, Bluegrass Chapter.



Peaceways is published 10 times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, 1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138, Lexington KY 40511. The next issue of *Peaceways* will appear in December. Deadline for calendar items is Nov. 15. Contact (859) 488-1448 or email peacewayseditor@gmail.com.

Calendar for Peace & Justice

The council seeks to promote dialogue as a path to peace and justice.

Consequently, we announce events that we do not necessarily endorse.

Fri., Nov. 2

Poor Peoples' Campaign, Poor People's Hearing in Kentucky, 7 p.m. Total Grace Church, 1313 N. Limestone, Lexington. Civil rights activists and campaign co-directors Rev. Dr. William Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis will speak.

Tues., Nov. 6

Election Day, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. To identify your polling place and to see a sample ballot, go to vrsws.sos.ky.gov. The site will ask for your name and the last four digits of your social security number and will take you to a page where you will see your polling place and your legislative districts. The site can also tell you how to find a ride to the polls.

Tues., Nov. 6

CKCPJ Peace Action committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Ongoing discussions of nonviolence training for training trainers of nonviolence, nonviolence efforts in schools, youth summer jobs program, and other peace-related activities

Tues., Nov. 6

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. How do we become healthy and happy in the face of societal fears and our own internalized homophobia/transphobia? Counselor from The Nest, Becky Katz, will share her own journey and tell us about The Nest's new LGBTQ+ support programs. The presentation and Q and A session will be followed by a confidential support group meeting.

Make a plan to vote! Will you go before work, during lunch, or after work? Will you bring your children or arrange childcare? How will you get to the polls? Walk, drive, utilize a free ride on a Lextran bus, get a ride from a friend or use Uber or Lyft? Can you provide transportation for a friend? If you are disabled, will be having a baby, or traveling and can't make it to the polls on Election Day, you can vote in person at the County Clerk's Office before Nov 6.

Tues., Nov. 13

CKCPJ Single-payer healthcare committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington.

Thurs., Nov. 15

William Wells Brown Neighborhood Association meeting, 6 p.m. William Wells Brown Community Center.

Sat., Nov. 17

Christian-Muslim dialog, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Masjid Bilal Ibn Rabah, 1545 Russell Cave Rd, Lexington. Topic: Hinduism. There will be a potluck meal following the presentation. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Mon., Nov. 19

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for the upcoming committee meetings, proposals for new initiatives and continuing action.

Thurs., Nov. 22

Thanksgiving Day, The Catholic Action Center celebrates with an evening meal on Thanksgiving. For more information about volunteering for this community event, or making a donation watch the CAC website, catholicactioncenter.net or its Facebook page

Mon. Dec. 3, Tues. Dec. 4

Newman Foundation, Religious Freedom At Home and Abroad, Father Thomas Reese. The Monday event is at the Cathedral of Christ the King, 299 Colony Blvd, Lexington. On Tuesday, at Kentucky State University, Carroll Academic Services Building, University Drive, Frankfort. Both evenings begin at 7 p.m.

Tues., Dec. 4

CKCPJ Peace Action committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Ongoing discussions of nonviolence training for training trainers of nonviolence, nonviolence efforts in schools, youth summer jobs program, and other peace-related activities

Lexington Coalition to Host Workshop

For several years, the Safe Summer Lexington Coalition (of which the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice has been a key element) has been worked to develop nonviolence training in Central Kentucky. Nonviolence training helps build safer communities and is a powerful means of personal and community growth. The coalition has recently negotiated with a national training organization, *Pace e Bene* (Latin for "peace and all good"), to help train and certify a group of trainers; at least 19 Central Kentuckians will participate.

The Board of *Pace e Bene* will provide an intensive three-day workshop in March 2019 to prepare and certify trainers of nonviolence.

To become eligible for the three-day workshop, local participants will complete the *Pace e Bene* nonviolence training curriculum in their study program titled Engage. Costs to bring in *Pace e Bene* trainers for a three-day workshop is \$2,500 plus the cost of airfare, food and lodging (for a two person team). Presently, Safe Summer Lexington Coalition has a budget of \$4,500 to cover those costs. CKCPJ has purchased Engage programs for local participants and will take a role in fundraising for the March workshop.

For more information on *Pace e Bene*, visit <http://www.paceebene.org/> For more information about the the Engage manual, click on "Store," then on "Books" and down to the Engage book. To complete the Engage program, the coalition is offering two groups of up to 10 members meeting on either Monday or Tuesday evenings in the first two weeks of November, December, January and February.

CKCPJ member Dr. Kerby Neill will facilitate the Monday group and Reverend Keith Tyler, with Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Lexington, will facilitate the Tuesday group. Participants will help lead some sessions themselves.

For more information, Contact Kerby Neill at (859) 396-6811 or kerbyneill@yahoo.com.

Vote like it's your last chance. It might be.

How Democracies Die, by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. Published Jan. 16, 2018 by Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, New York. 232 pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

Okay, quickly down to cases here. I've reviewed some relatively fun books recently. Not this time. This is a stark book for a stark situation, and we have to read it and act on its lessons right now.

Nov. 6 could represent the voters' last chance to grab democracy back from the brink of authoritarianism. This book lists all the ways despots have killed formerly healthy democracies all over the world – in Turkey, Chile, Venezuela, many others. And it's happening here as well.

The current occupant of the White House deserves only a slice of the blame; the tribal politics of hateful exclusion began far before. Perhaps the boil first came to a head with Newt Gingrich, and others since have further inflamed it, but right now secondary to blaming is reclaiming.

The authors foresee three possible

scenarios looming after the election Nov. 6, the first two less likely than the third. (1) Democrats win large and begin to rebuild our institutions, and the "Trump interlude" becomes a curious history-class footnote; or, (2) Republicans gain more solid majorities and proceed to dismantle voting rights, legislative districting, fair judicial appointments, fairness in immigration, women's rights, LGBT progress, environmental regulation, and who knows what else; or (3), most likely, the parties fight to a draw, and government continues without guardrails, as we see happening today in North Carolina.

In that state, a rabid Republican legislature rammed through last-second limits on the incoming Democratic governor's power in a nakedly partisan upending of political norms. Several of their overreaches that made voting difficult, primarily for African-Americans, were later successfully challenged in court, but the legislature used their control of election boards to implement several of them anyway. And now we see minority-focused mass disenfranchisement being carried out by a Republican secretary of state with gubernatorial aspirations in Georgia.

This is our likely natural picture when politics abandons the stabilizing guardrails of mutual tolerance (adversaries are not demons to be destroyed), and institutional forbearance (not doing everything you are allowed to do to vanquish an enemy, in a spirit of cooperation).

The book summarizes democracy's struggle in other countries to show that the same can happen here. A lot of pre-Trumpian history is recapitulated (painful to read) and current excesses that threaten American democracy are dispassionately listed.

At this point I truncate my usual review style to rather present some impressive singular facts from the narrative.

- Moderates were hollowed out of the Republican Party as they became aware that white nationalism gained them votes and support, leaving the party vulnerable to takeover by radicals.
- We should worry for democracy when an authoritarian leader (1) rejects the democratic rules of

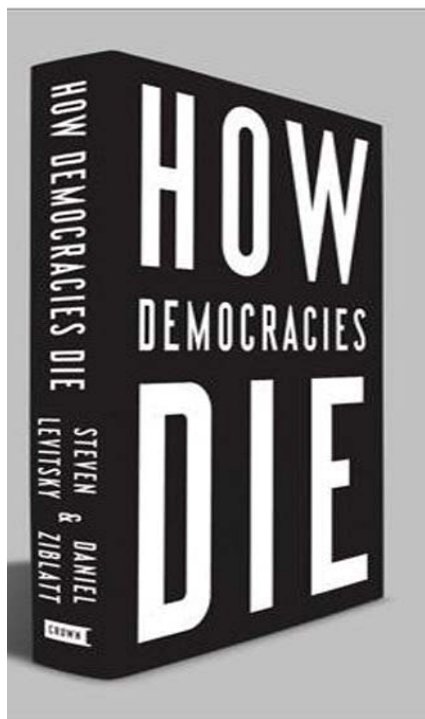
the game, (2) attacks legitimacy of opponents, (3) tolerates or encourages violence, and (4) curtails the civil liberties of opponents, including the media. All this sounds rather familiar recently, doesn't it?

- Trump's celebrity power and the boost from media, both right-wing and conventional, circumvented the process by which party insiders used to informally screen out radicals. By the time the Republican power centers realized Trump was steamrolling, it was too late to brake. Democrats, meanwhile, applied the "superdelegate" concept, which served to alienate much of the Bernie wing.
- The opposite of institutional forbearance is "constitutional hardball," including the impeachment of President Bill Clinton on a relative technicality of grand jury testimony, and continuing through the year-long denial of a Supreme Court confirmation hearing for Merrick Garland. (The authors find President Barack Obama somewhat complicit for not making a bigger deal of opposing Leader McConnell on this.) Players of constitutional hardball want to win, and they don't care if they destroy the game in the process.
- Name-calling with no basis in fact flourished in the Obama years. Trump's birtherism, the secret-Muslim rumors, and other fictions of the right-wing spread like kudzu over social media, with no editorial presence to fact-check in the initial go-around (when the most damage is done). Incivility has mushroomed since.

There are many more eye-openers than I have space to list, and I must urge in these remaining lines that you not only go out and vote Nov. 6, but also canvass your friends and relatives who don't plan to vote, change their minds, and drag them with you.

Raise your voice, because otherwise it might soon be silenced. Vote as if the life of democracy depends on it.

Reviewer Jim Trammel finds nothing he can joke about to lighten this message. Vote. Please.



Submissions to Peaceways

Articles submitted to *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ's mission and concerns.

Feature articles should be no longer than 500 words, unless you are willing to have the piece cut to fit one page of *Peaceways* text. Pieces will be edited for clarity.

Please include references in the text for all quotations, statistics, and unusual facts. End-notes or footnotes are not used.

Please query submissions to peacewayseditor@gmail.com before writing a feature article intended solely for *Peaceways*.

For all submissions, the author's name, address, and phone number should appear on the body of the submitted text.

If you submit material that has been published or which you are also submitting to other publishers, be sure to indicate this. Also include information about your relationship to any organization or issue mentioned in the article for inclusion in a biographical reference at the end of the story.

Submissions should be made in Word format *via* email. Book reviews are usually solicited by the editor, but we welcome inquiries from potential reviewers.

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month. *Peaceways* is published monthly except January.

Support CKCPJ by linking
your Kroger Plus card
to #16439 at
krogercommunityrewards.com

MONTHLY MEETINGS

CKCPJ Steering Committee Meetings, third Monday, 5 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. More info: (859) 488-1448 or peaceandjusticecky@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace, every Thursday, 5:30 - 6 p.m. at Triangle Park (corner of Broadway and Main Street) in downtown Lexington. Contact Richard Mitchell, (859) 327-6277.

Migrant Network Coalition, first Monday, noon - 1:15 p.m., GLOBAL LEX, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Lindsay Mattingly, lmatingly@lexpublib.org, (859) 231-5514.

PFLAG Central Kentucky, second Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family members, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Visit info@pflagcentralky.org or (859) 338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky, second Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, chair, (859) 951-8565 or info@lexfair.org.

Wednesday Night GLSO "Heart to Heart" discussion group, 7 p.m., Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave., Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they have quietly provided services to the GLBTQQIA community for decades. More info, Pride Center hours. and other links at www.glsso.org.

Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky, first Thursday, 7 p.m., Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd., Lexington. The Forum is a Chapter of the American Humanist Association. Meetings are open to people of all beliefs willing to express their opinions in a civil manner. Child care is provided. Contact President Staci Maney, staci@olliegee.com or (859) 797-2662.

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, third Thursday, 7 p.m., Episcopal Diocese Mission House at Fourth St. and MLK Blvd, Lexington. Contact Beth Howard, (859) 276-0563.

NAMI Lexington Support Groups, every Sunday, 2:30 - 4 p.m. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Ct., Lexington. Call (859) 272-7891 or visit www.namilex.org.

Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program, fourth Saturday, 10 a.m. - noon. All are welcome. Locations vary, call (859) 277-5126. The Christian-Muslim dialogue promotes understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. By exploring moral, cultural and political factors shaping the current context, the program promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

Dance Jam, every Tuesday, 5:30 - 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. Move to the extent you are able. Sponsored by Motion Matters, \$7 per session to cover space rental. Contact Pamela, info@motionmatters.org, (859) 351-3142.

Movies with Spirit, second Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 p.m., film at 7.

National Action Network, third Thursday each month, 7 - 8:30 p.m. at the Central Library, Lexington.

Showing Up for Racial Justice, second Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Wild Fig Coffee and Books, 726 N. Limestone, Lexington.

To include a regular meeting of your organization in this space, contact Margaret Gabriel, peacewayseditor@gmail.com.

Encouraging youth to use the power of their vote

by Peter Berres

As the 1968 presidential election careened to conclusion, in my ninth month as an eyewitness to the disaster of Vietnam, my disillusionment was completed by absurdity: I was too young to vote. The majority of us were too young to vote.

Tragic hypocrisy laid bare: shameful conscription of 18-, 19-, 20-year-olds who had no political voice – to fight and die, young.

Worse yet, I realized that executive, legislative and military decision-makers, compromised by personal egos, political motivations and professional interests, were incapable of fashioning an exit. My last hope, a system-correcting electoral process, *via* election of a President committed to quickly ending the slaughter, dissipated with Nixon vs. Humphrey.

I was disheartened by an election between two exceedingly poor candidates whose priorities were personal and partisan, and not the interest of those killing and dying in Vietnam.

The “law-and-order” candidate, Richard Nixon, intimating a “war” against the antiwar and civil-rights movements, also hinted at a secret plan to end the war. Winning by less than one percent, Nixon intensified and escalated the war into Laos and Cambodia, with the loss of around an additional 25,000 American lives. He finally settled for a peace agreement in 1973 that would have been possible in 1968.

The dissolving illusions of America’s myth-laden ideology left soldiers blowing in the wind. Many chose to ignore disconfiting realities; others took them on. Identity, adrift, can cause one to double down on familiar beliefs and opinions (namely the biases and prejudices we all owned), or the process can be transformative—tantamount to freedom from mental slavery and liberation to re-create a conscious self.

“When the truth is found to be lies / And all the joy within you

dies...” Jefferson Airplane wailed the conundrum many felt. Grace Slick’s resolution “... You gotta find somebody to love,” was not an option. Searching for truth, independent thinking or a truly principled identity, thankfully, was.

As the war raged through its deadliest months, a singular glimmer of hope emerged: the Paris Peace Talks.

Having declared my anti-war sentiments to command, physically debilitated by a sciatic nerve (pinched diving for protection behind a sandbag wall), I was fortuitously assigned to the Vietnamese/American Intelligence Center. There, in Orwellian fashion, I censored atrocities from battlefield reports and then prepared briefing documents for American negotiators in Paris. My hope — that I could contribute to peace by providing statistical analysis — saved my soul temporarily.

Truth is the first victim of war, and I quickly learned nothing mangles truth like statistics — especially when misreported, mistranslated, miscalculated, manipulated, or censored out of existence. My concern became that the “talks” should revolve around philosophical approaches to peace, for which stats were meaningless.

My naïve enthusiasm was challenged by debate over who should have a seat at, and the corresponding shape of, the negotiating table in Paris, which caused delay after deadly delay. My hope, though battered, nonetheless sustained me through my tour.

We’re hard pressed to identify good results from the American war in Vietnam. An obvious one: the 26th amendment, ratified March 1971.

Since World War II, Congress had failed to lower the voting age. After Korea, General-turned-President Dwight Eisenhower’s 1954 State of the Union address publicly supported a constitutional amendment: “For years our citizens between the ages of 18 and 21 have, in time of peril, been summoned to fight for America.

They should participate in the political process that produces this fateful summons.”

Fateful indeed. More than half of American servicemen killed in Vietnam were between 18 and 20.

The 26th Amendment gave youth the vote, but they don’t vote. Why? Typical youthful self-absorption? Voter suppression laws? Politics presented as merely an “interest” choice? Or — calculated to protect political and economic power — the pervasive disparagement of politics as too corrupt to work or even care about?

Doesn’t matter. Because important change often comes uniquely with generational change, ways must be found to engage the young voter beyond party identification and ideological labels, the bane of our political participation.

Model for them, teach them: To honor Vietnam veterans, to support troops generally, can’t really mean inconsequential symbolism, platitudes of gratitude or “just” voting. Our democracy will survive only with an informed electorate as the final counterbalance to the tribal partisanship and destruction of the checks and balances system we witness today.

Approaching the 2018 and 2020 elections, I feel the same urgency of Election ’68, a pivotal time when the youth vote may well have fueled a peace candidate’s victory, changing history in Vietnam and America.

The future again in the balance, we must harness the energy of youthful indignation (#MeToo, school shootings, Black Lives Matter...) to recognize the limits of political action *via* social media and believe in the viability and necessity of our electoral process.

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Peter Berres is a CKCPJ member. This column is reprinted from the Lexington Herald Leader.

PEACEWAYS

The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138,
Lexington KY 40511
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*I'm for truth,
no matter who tells it.
I'm for justice,
no matter who it's for or against.*

~ Malcolm X

Wild Fig Worker Cooperative

The October issue of *Peaceways* reported that the Wild Fig community, people who have used the Lexington bookstore as a gathering area and safe space as well as a place to buy great books, are considering ways to re-imagine Wild Fig Books and Coffee in a way that will enable it to continue to serve the community.

Under the facilitation of community activist April Taylor, Wild Fig is in the process of transitioning into Wild Fig Worker Cooperative. There is no date for a re-opening (Wild Fig closed in late September), but readers who watch the website of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice or its Facebook page will be kept apprised of the re-opening date.

As of the November publication of *Peaceways*, Wild Fig has five co-op shares at a rate of \$5,000 per share that will be used to raise the needed operating capital, April said.

Although there was a offer on the table that would enable the budding co-op to obtain a mortgage and purchase the building, April says that the group decided against accepting the offer, but that the creation of the worker-owned co-op would enable the community to retain ownership of the business without having to be concerned about gentrification of the location.

April reports on the solidity of the co-op structure, saying that 9.3 billion people in the world rely on co-ops for such basic needs as food and housing

as well as manufacturing and day care.

In late October, April attended a conference at the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tenn. "We work with people fighting for justice, equality and sustainability supporting their efforts to take collective action to shape their own destiny," according to the center's website. The conference enabled her to increase her knowledge



People interested in the worker co-op met to brainstorm in September.

Margaret Gabriel

of worker-owned co-ops and sharpen her organizing tools. For more information, see co-op's Facebook page, search Wild Fig

Father Reese to speak in Kentucky in December

The Newman Foundation Distinguished Speaker Program will host Father Thomas Reese, a Senior Analyst at Religion News Service, on Dec. 3 at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Lexington and on Dec. 4 at Kentucky State University.

Father Reese will examine the intersection of religious and personal freedom in the U.S. as well as the plight of those persecuted for their religious affiliations in other countries.

Father Reese's column, *Signs of the*

Times, appears in the *National Catholic Reporter*. He earned his Ph.D. in political science from the University of California at Berkeley, and is the author of three books: *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church*; *Archbishop*; and *A Flock of Shepherds*.

Both events are free. For more information, visit www.newmanfnd.org.