

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

December 2019

Seeking Refuge:

The Surprising Prophetic Vision of a Marching Band

by Leah D. Schade

Lafayette High School Marching Band from Lexington has once again earned first place in the 5A category at the Kentucky Music Educators Association (KMEA) state marching band competition. Their show, "Seeking Refuge," was notable not just for the amazing performance by the students, but because of the provocative theme and music. Some might say it made a political statement. But, more importantly, it was prophetic, because it presented not just a critique of the world as it is but lifted up a vision of what it can and should be.

The show begins with the band members on the outer edges of the field and the color guard in the center. In their black field caps, uniforms, and visors, the musicians look like soldiers who are moving in on the children – the color guard who are dressed in white outfits that symbolize the innocence of youth. The children are playing with each other in the center of the field until the soldiers rush in, hitting them, throwing them to the ground, and attacking them.

The set pieces are huge curved spikes jutting into the air. They are moved into a "wall" in one section of the field as the battery hammers out a militaristic rhythm that electrifies the troops in a unified line. The dramatic first movement ends

with a group of soldiers chasing a child across the field to the wall where they surround her and point their "guns" (instruments). She falls to the ground.

The second movement is like a ballet. The soldiers sit in suspended animation while a flute solo accompanies the dance of the children in front of the wall. When the soldiers finally rise from their positions, their movements are slow and majestic, indicating that perhaps a transformation is beginning.

The final movement begins with an organ solo accompanied by the front ensemble as the children emerge wearing white and gold, another sign that transformation is happening – from fearfulness to fearlessness, even as the soldiers continue their intricate drills across the field.

As the movement comes to its climax, the giant spikes are turned into a circular refuge. In other words, the walls of pain are transformed into a sanctuary. Swords become plowshares; instruments of death



are changed into protectors of life.

As a rising wall of otherworldly sound fills the stadium, the soldiers remove their caps and place them on the ground as the sanctuary lights up in a glorious transformation. The soldiers turn around to reveal that they are human, they are flesh and blood. Not military automatons, but real people – young women and men whose humanity is finally set free. At the conclusion, the sanctuary door opens to reveal a soldier lifting a child up onto his shoulders and the musicians remove their visors. Their eyes and faces beam. The transformation is complete.

These high school students have put their hearts and souls into a prophetic vision that shows us what it looks like when the soldiers put down their weapons, take off their masks of violence, and become the protectors of children. No longer pawns of war, they are now instruments of peace. Transformation is possible – from fear to courage, from violence to peace, from hatred to love. This is the refuge we seek.

Leah D. Schade is an ordained Lutheran minister, the assistant professor of preaching and worship at Lexington Theological Seminary, and a Lafayette Band parent.



Gun Violence In America as of 11-24-19 (excluding suicide)

2019 (year to date)

Killed	13,503
Wounded	26,512

2018 (annual)

Killed	13,321
Wounded	25,734

Source: www.gunviolencearchive.org

Register for Time to THRIVE

The Human Rights Campaign is sponsoring a conference on Feb. 14-16, 2020 in Washington, D.C., at the Renaissance Washington, D.C. Downtown Hotel. The conference welcomes people working with LGBTQ youth who want to learn more about creating a safe and inclusive environment for them. HRC has partnered with the National Education Association, the American Counseling Association, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, among others, to present Time to THRIVE, an annual national conference for youth-serving professionals on supporting LGBTQ youth. To register, go to timetothrive.org. Registration includes the full three-day conference, includes registration, meals and free resources.

The Human Rights Commission also has registration scholarships for those with financial need.

HRC's annual Time to THRIVE conference provides an opportunity for youth-serving professionals to build awareness and cultural competency, learn current and emerging best practices, and gather resources from leading experts and national organizations in the field. In addition to several celebrities and youth speakers, 65 diverse workshops are planned which will be presented by over 40 national and grassroots organizations. Many exhibitors will distribute free resources on LGBTQ inclusion.

For more information contact Andi Salinas at Andi.Salinas@hrc.org.

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.

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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.

One World Films

When the winter doldrums seem to be taking over, in Lexington we can look forward to the One World Film Festival to brighten our days.

OWF believes film can present issues of culture, society, ethnicity, gender, and the politics that surrounds them in ways that increase understanding and encourage creative thinking about complex social situations. OWF challenges the increasingly diverse population of Lexington and Central Kentucky on these issues through its annual One World Film Festival: a festival with speakers worth hearing, discussions worth having and, most importantly, current films worth seeing.

Since its inception, the One World Film Festival has shown over 130 films to over 18,000 festival attendees. Films have been shown at a variety of venues including the

historic Kentucky Theater, the Lexington Public Library Theater, the University of Kentucky, and Transylvania University. Some screenings are followed with discussions about the issues brought up in the films. Festival highlights have included film participants and directors discussing their work with audiences and panelists who are expert on the issues raised in the films.

Each year, One World Films screens a pertinent film at the Kentucky Theatre, 214 E. Main St., Lexington, at 2 p.m. on Martin Luther King Day. For 2020, OWF has selected "Green Book," which won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2019. The screening is free.

The schedule for the 2020 series will appear in the February 2020 issue of *Peaceways*.

Lexington LWV Essay Contest entry invitation

The League of Women Voters of Lexington asks all Fayette County 9th-12th grade social studies/history teachers to encourage their students to participate in the League's annual Jay Ogden Essay Contest. LWV recently sent invitations to public and private schools, as well as to homeschooling associations.

This year's topic is: Why do eligible young voter (ages 18-25) have lower voting rates than older voters? Participation in the contest requires research as well as discussion of the issue with peers. The goal is to help

prepare students to be informed citizens who understand the value of voter participation.

Winning students receive \$250 for first place, \$150 for second place, \$100 for third place, and \$100 for ESL writing special recognition. As well, a small honorarium is awarded to the teacher/sponsor of each winning writer. Essays are due by Dec. 6, 2019; awards will be presented in February 2020. For more information, email Theresa McCarty at lwvlexessay@gmail.com.



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 February 2020. Deadline for calendar items is Jan. 10. 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.

Sun., Dec. 1

World AIDS Day, 7-9 p.m. Lyric Theatre, 300 E. Third St., Lexington. "Celebration of Life." The free event will include many speakers and entertainers.

Thurs., Dec. 5

Lyric Theatre and Cultural Arts

Center, Miracle on Third St., 6-9 p.m. 300 E. Third St., Lexington. Don't miss Santa's GRAND arrival at 6:30 p.m.

take photos with Santa, make ornaments for the Lyric Tree, decorating holiday cookies, and participate in an Ugly Sweater Contest

The Lyric has partnered with the Lexington F.O.F. Firefighters Toy Program. Please consider bringing an unwrapped toy to be given to a family in need during the holiday season.

Fri., Dec. 6

Lexington League of Women Voters

Deadline, Jay Ogden Essay Contest. All public school, private school and home-schooled 9th through 12th graders are invited to submit an essay responding to the prompt "Why do eligible young voters (ages 18-25) have lower voting rates than older voters?" For more information see the story on page 2.

Mon., Dec. 16

CKCPJ steering committee meeting

5 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.

Tues.-Thurs., Dec. 17-19

Faith and Community Christmas

Store, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. each day, Southland Christian Church, 2349 Richmond Road (the former Lexington Mall). The store provides free, gently used toys to children, and gifts to people of all ages. No registration needed to shop for gifts. To register for one or more volunteer shifts or to make donations, see catholicactioncenter.

Tues., Jan. 7

CKCPJ peace action committee

5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion of non-violence training and other peace-related activity.

Tues., Jan. 14

CKCPJ single-payer health care committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington.

Tues., Jan. 14

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Dr. Emily Askew of Lexington Theological Seminary will address the tensions, aims and resolutions of LGBTQ+ issues in the church, in the community, and in families. There will be discussion and Q-and-A for the first hour, followed by our confidential support group meeting.

Mon., Jan. 20

One World Film Festival, 2 p.m., Kentucky Theater, 214 E. Main Street. As part of Lexington's celebration of Martin Luther King day, One World Films will screen the Academy Award Best Picture winner *Green Book*. The film explores the relationship between men of different races and cultures. Free.

Tues., Jan. 21

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 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. Note that the meeting has moved to Tuesday because of the MLK holiday observance.

Sat., Jan. 25

Christian-Muslim dialog, 10 a.m.-noon. Hunter Presbyterian Church, 109 Rosemont Garden, Lexington. Dr. Jamil Farooqui, *Being an Interfaith Activist*. Dr. Farooqui has spoken about his passion for interfaith dialogue, and will be with CMD to share his enthusiasm and ideas.

Tues., Feb. 4

CKCPJ peace action committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion of non-violence training and other peace-related activity.

Sun., Feb. 9

One World Films, The first film of the 2020 series will screen on this day. The film, location and time to be announced. Information about the series will appear in the February issue of *Peaceways*.

Tues., Feb. 11

CKCPJ single-payer health care committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington.

Fri-Sun., Feb. 14-16

Human Rights Campaign, *Time to Thrive*, Renaissance Washington, D.C. Downtown Hotel. The conferences invites people working with LGBTQ youth who would like to learn more about creating safe environments for them. For more information, see the story on page 2.

The wise seek peace

Enjoy the blessings of the holiday season

A Plea to the Supreme Court for DACA

by Bishop John Stowe

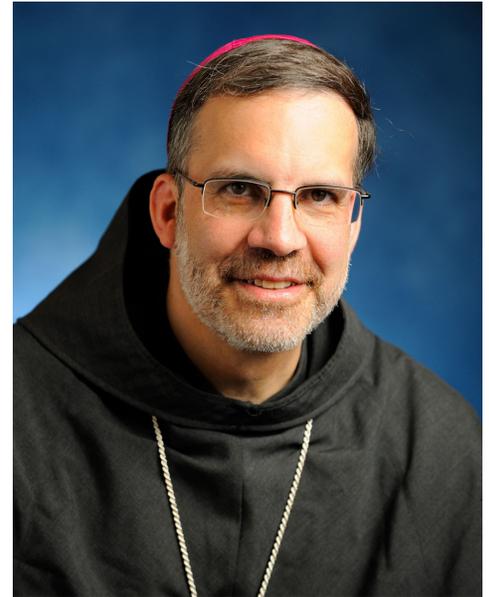
On Tuesday, Nov. 12 the Supreme Court heard arguments about the legality of the Trump Administration's ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy established by the Obama Administration in 2012. The Supreme Court should consider carefully the impacts a decision will have on the more than 700,000 recipients of DACA and their family members. Seven years after the program was instituted, almost 20 percent of DACA recipients are now in their thirties, and in many cases have children and families of their own. In addition to being students, they are graduates, members of the work force, and the armed forces. They are Americans with Social Security numbers who are paying into the system, paying taxes and contributing to the common good of the nation.

DACA was originally instituted because of the failure of Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Because the immigration system is broken and doesn't allow for the legal entry of enough immigrants to meet employment needs, many immigrants overstay their visas or enter the country without documentation. The decades-long failure of the U.S. government to fix immigration policy so that those who have a need to work can enter the country legally to do so, can be reunited with family members in the country, and can help meet

current labor needs led to the Obama administration's DACA program. DACA specified certain qualifications for a program that employs prosecutorial discretion in the enforcement of immigration law. Prosecutorial discretion has been used by several presidential administrations prior to Obama.

DACA recipients have to be either students, have a high school diploma, or be in the armed services, and they must have no criminal record. The status must be renewed every two years, but it allows the recipients to work, to apply for loans, and to qualify for financial aid for higher education. The target population, as the name implies, are those who arrived in the country unlawfully as minors. DACA recipients consider the U.S. their native country because, in many cases, it is the only country they have known, and they have gone to school here.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments concerning whether the program was ended lawfully under the Administrative Procedures Act. I hope the Supreme Court protects this program, allows it to continue, and removes the conditions of constant fear and uncertainty that affect these young and productive members of our society. DACA recipients have already made significant contributions to our nation and should be protected and ultimately provided with a path to permanent residency and citizenship.



We have heard too much baseless rhetoric and witnessed too much vitriol directed towards the immigrant community. The Judeo-Christian scriptures consider the immigrant to have special rights and to call forth a special concern from the larger community. It is well past time that we get serious about comprehensive immigration reform.

Bishop John is the bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lexington.

CKCPJ on Facebook

By "Liking" the CKCPJ Facebook page, you will receive posts by a variety of people focused on local, national and international issues.

Items from the *Washington Post* and other national publications routinely appear on the CKCPJ Facebook page, so you can expect varied and enlightening posts. Check them out and be sure to share.

Recent posts include a link to stories about "Right to Work," Former Gov. Matt Bevin's implication of voting irregularities, the impeachment, and climate change (87 percent of Americans are unaware there is a scientific consensus on climate change.)



United We Dream®

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 peaceandjusticeky@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.

Why Elections Matter Even if You Can't Vote

By Sadie Bograd

For many years, I thought of Election Day as nothing more than a day off from school. I'd sleep in late, watch TV or YouTube videos all day, and let my parents tell me whether our government had been saved or ruined.

This response can feel natural to many teenagers. After all, we're too young to vote, so why bother staying informed, right? With all the academic and social stress that is a part of high school, it seems we shouldn't have to pile on additional worries about the state of our democracy.

That approach won't work any more.

To be fair, it never really did; informed and active citizens have been indispensable to this country's success since the first settlers landed at Jamestown. But especially in today's political climate, with parties more polarized than ever and life-threatening problems of climate change and gun violence, being disengaged simply isn't an option.

Youth activists around the world have shown students that our voices can make a real impact. Furthermore, they've proven that, in many cases, we're the only ones who can. Just take the well-known example of sixteen-year-old Greta Thunberg, whose individual protests against climate inaction in front of the Swedish parliament led her to speak to (and call out) world leaders at the United Nations. Or look to the inspiring leaders of the March for Our Lives movement who led walkouts and demonstrations against gun violence, including one at Dunbar last year.

No matter the topic, youth leaders continue to display their bravery, intellect, and determination while legislators defer to their corporate donors. Their work should convince all of us of the need to advocate for political causes that matter to us.

This charge can seem daunting. After all, most of us don't know how to plan a rally or spearhead a protest. But that doesn't mean there's nothing you can do. With every Election Day, there are plenty of ways for students to participate, even if they're under 18.

"It's always good to inform yourself and talk to those that can vote about

your opinions even if you can't or don't vote," said senior Parker Smith, who is on the leadership team of Dunbar's Young Democrats club. "Phone banking and event volunteering are also options, but they come on a limited basis."

Simply being an informed citizen, as Parker noted, is an integral first step.

But how do you go about doing that? With political ads, bots, and memes attacking our social media feeds, and news streams from every corner, it's difficult to know what's accurate and what's exaggerated.

When in doubt, you can always trust a reputable news organization – articles from the *New York Times* or *The Washington Post* are typically more reliable than some stranger's blog or angry tweet.

There's also an even more direct source of information about a candidate's beliefs: the candidates themselves.

Cindy Heine is a board member of the nonpartisan civic organization Kentucky League of Women Voters. She advised that one way to understand candidates' positions is to listen to them in forums and debates rather than make decisions based on 30-second ads and sound bites.

"As a long-time organizer of forums for the League of Women Voters, I frequently get a very different impression of candidates when they spontaneously answer our questions," she said. "As contentious as the recent gubernatorial debate was, if you listened carefully, you got a good sense of the priorities of and differences between the two leading candidates."

Understanding candidates' positions are especially critical if you're actually 18 years old. Voting is of the utmost importance. There's a widespread belief that local elections are unimportant because they're less publicized.



In reality, though, local and state politicians make the decisions that most impact our daily lives.

"Every election is important in determining who sets priorities and policies at the local, state, and national levels. These policies affect our everyday lives, from potholes and traffic to education, jobs, and national security," said Heine. "That is the key to a well-functioning democracy."

So where does that leave you? In short, with lots of options. Even if you couldn't vote last Nov. 5, there are innumerable ways to get involved, from attending a rally, to phone banking, to simply reading the news (including your trusty *PLD Lamplighter*). What matters is that you do something.

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Sadie Bograd is a staff writer for the student PLD Lamplighter newspaper, and is a junior at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School. She serves as the student board member of the League of Women Voters of Lexington.

Reprinted with permission from the October 30, 2019, *Paul Laurence Dunbar Lamplighter*, pdlamplighter.org

PEACEWAYS

The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138
Lexington KY 40511

Issue #325 • December 2019

“If you end up with a boring miserable life because you listened to your mom, your dad, your teacher, your priest, or some guy on television ... then you deserve it.”

~ Frank Zappa

Book review

A Warning

By “Anonymous, A Senior Trump Administration Official.”

Published Nov. 19, 2019 by Hachette Book Group. 272 pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

The secret inside-the-White-House book by a furtive inner-circle adviser who is apparently very good at keeping his (or her) thoughts private exploded onto the news-exposé scene two days ago as I write this. I broke my vow never to travel this well-worn review path again because this is the person who wrote the also-anonymous New York Times op-ed piece that first disclosed that nearby operatives were working to keep the worst excesses of the unbalanced Donald Trump in check.

Now he says they can't succeed in that. (I apologize for my inability to stay off “he” pronoun; okay, the author could possibly also be Kelleyanne, or Omarosa, or Hope – though my money personally is on John Bolton, because of the extremely good seats this author had to some very private moments and because the writer seems most aggrieved by the foreign-affairs incompetence.) The “Steady State” old hands now know they can't control this phenomenon. This is fresh bad news.

Should Trump be re-elected, the guardrails are down and what few restraints there are will disappear. I hold out no hope that impeachment and removal will succeed. At best the effort will damage him enough that either sane Republicans replace him at the top of the ticket (not likely either), or Americans come to their senses

and bounce this unqualified accidental Oval Office occupant, an outcome for which I have some hope after the equally arrogant-without-cause Matt Bevin crashed earlier this month. But this most likely of the alternatives is basically a coin flip. We all must vote.

The book breaks no new ground, but it is a smoothly readable summary of many of Trump's least Presidential moments. Covered to satisfaction are his major missteps in foreign policy (though he got a pass on his Syria troop-withdrawal fumble).

Putin-love and Trump's Kim-crush is often criticized, as is his fascination with other despots. The Ukraine affair gets its quick mention. House Democrats seem to have settled on this as the mainspring of their impeachment effort – some fairly explosive testimony went down on TV just as I was finishing this read.

A discerning voter trying to make up his/her mind how to vote should primarily consider the chilling personality portrait that transcends the specifics of his illegalities. The author, and everyone observing (he says), concludes that Trump is simply unfit for the job. We have had undisciplined, incurious, inexperienced, or amoral Presidents before, the author writes, but “rarely if ever before have we had them all at once.”

His efficiency is harshly evaluated

by a reported group meeting of the White House officials and Cabinet secretaries minus the “pro-chaos crowd,” which I'm sure included Stephen Bannon, and others of his radical bent. These relatively sane people said, “About a third of the things the President wants us to do are flat-out stupid. Another third would be impossible to implement and wouldn't even solve the problem. And a third of them would be flat-out illegal.” Government official or grocery stock boy, with a review like that how could you or I keep from being fired?

The rest is details you already know if you've been following the news through gritted teeth and elevated blood pressure. My sympathies, I'll see you on the cardiac ward.

My suggestion: Buy the book, give it as a present to your crazy Trumpian uncle who you won't be able to avoid over the holidays, dare him to read it and then explain to you why he should re-elect such a monster.

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Reviewer Jim Trammel was performing in a production of the Lyndon Johnson biographical show All the Way the night Trump was elected. He's in another political play now, Assassins, by John Weidman, music by Stephen Sondheim, and maybe will celebrate the impeachment trial during its run in February.