

The 2020 Candidate

Lloyd Bruce Miller

lulu

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A wide range of political and social attitudes are expressed in this musing manifesto.

Lloyd Bruce Miller's expressive personal narrative, *The 2020 Candidate*, is a thought experiment about running in the 2020 United States presidential election.

This stream-of-consciousness narrative ranges widely, almost immediately undercutting any expectations of a confident candidate. Miller declares that he is the first person to doubt his potential when it comes to the presidency. He discusses everything from his ambivalence about the responsibilities involved in being president to his lack of interest in traveling overseas and spending time in the White House.

The work hews close to Miller's thought processes. There are moments of revelation, but there are also extreme notions, as with a declaration that bullies are exercising their free speech. A wide range of political and social attitudes are expressed.

What emerges from the book's tangential discussions of Miller's potential candidacy are a variety of loose political opinions that are painted in broad strokes. Outreach to the homeless, for instance, is an important part of Miller's platform, but his solution to the problem of homelessness is limited: he seeks to find homeless people and talk to them. The text voices general attitudes on crime, Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, the right to die, and other topics in a conversational tone. It also comments on Miller's obscurity, and directs a note to the audience: they will need to affirm his work if he is to run.

Many of the text's political musings are not connected to the president's job description at all. Asides, like a discussion of the president's salary and another about Miller's love of computer chess, cloud the book's purpose. Some self-referential statements give the book the feel of a first draft, rather than a completed project.

The text's casual tone is disarming, but contributes to its lack of conventionality. It is disorganized, and many of the attitudes expressed, such as that a mugger deserves more punishment than Bernie Madoff, are outside of the norm, but are not imparted with enough supporting material to make them compelling. Some comments undercut the framing of the book; Miller declares "I don't necessarily want to be president. Maybe I just want to be an author."

The text is formatted in an unconventional way, with words running only in the middle of the page. Idiosyncratic spacing choices are distracting.

The 2020 Candidate is an expressive manifesto by someone intrigued by, but generally uninterested in, candidacy for president.

LAURA LEAVITT (April 13, 2019)

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