

# A Stunning Look at Growing up Gay in the Striving, Black Middle-class of the '60s and '70s

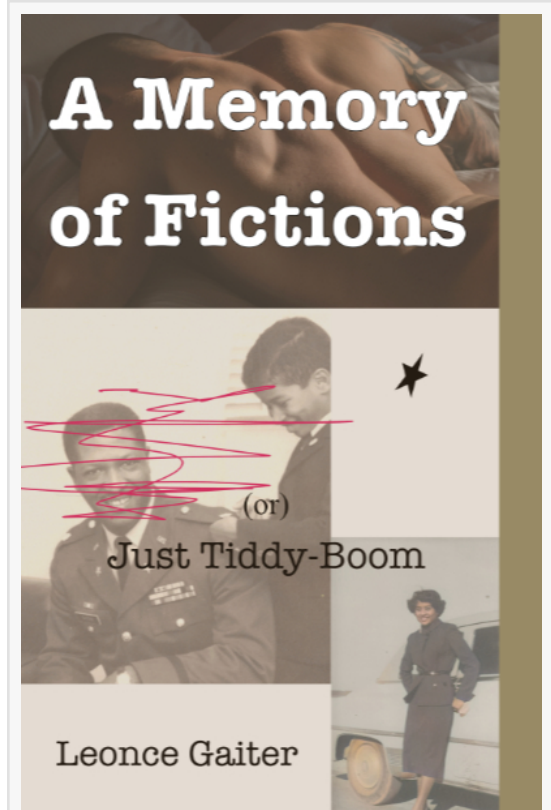
*A glimpse into the rarified worlds of New Orleans' black Creoles and the Strivers they spawned*

PARADISE, CA, US, July 31, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While providing a rare glimpse into the worlds of New Orleans' black Creoles and the upwardly mobile "strivers" they spawned, author [Leonce Gaiter's](#) "A Memory of Fictions (or) Just Tiddy-Boom" turns the tables on identity by presenting a young man who rejects others' definition of who he should be - or how he should behave - as a man, as black, or as gay - to crash his way through life on his own imperfect terms.

From a child aghast at his Louisiana family's southern gothic bent, to a teen facing devastating tragedy, through a ribald, raucous stint at Harvard that feeds his grandiose ambitions, to a liquor-soaked swirl through '80s Hollywood, "A Memory of Fictions..." presents a vivid, eloquent portrait of Jessie Vincent Grandier as he grows into a man.

Gaiter said, "I begin the book with a quote from the great Spanish writer Jorge Luis Borges that suggests, '...our life is a vague memory or dim reflection, doubtless false and fragmented, of an irrevocable process.' Quite often, memories are simply lies we tell ourselves. I realize that what I recall might be no truer than what I imagine. This book plays with the haze between memory and make believe. I can't even tell where the facts of my life end and my perceptions of those facts distort them to the level of fiction. With this book, I stopped pretending I could tell the difference. It's part truth, part twisted truth, part complete fancy."

"A Memory of Fictions (or) Just Tiddy-Boom" also provides a unique focus on New Orleans' black Creole culture and the black, striver middle-class of the 1960s. "New Orleans Creoles were a wild bunch," Gaiter laughs. "They comported themselves—and insisted their children comport themselves—like semi-royalty. When they spawned Strivers like my parents, the results could be



Leonce Gaiter's "A Memory of Fictions (or) Just Tiddy-Boom"

a relentless pursuit of the impossible goal of proving themselves unassailable to racist white eyes—the epitome of ‘respectability politics,’ which took a toll.”

The book has earned critical praise. Blue Ink Review stated, “Gaiter’s wonderfully evocative language, filled with musicality, captures the complexity of Jessie’s emotions as he struggles to make sense of his... place in the world.” IndieReader called it, “...a bold novel. Sometimes beautiful, sometimes brutal, the prose is always thoroughly engrossing.”



Author Leonce Gaiter

Gaiter is thrilled that the book’s sometimes tragic, often hilarious look at race, sex, and growing up is appealing to readers. “I think Jessie’s journey is everyone’s,” he says. “We all want to throw off the shackles and be ourselves, regardless of what ‘the rules’ tell us we ought to be.”

“

...Another school declares that the whole of time has already happened and that our life is a vague memory or dim reflection, doubtless false and fragmented, of an irrevocable process.”

*Jorge Luis Borges*

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