

BOOK REVIEW

Novel about activist is for open discussion

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER
FOR THE CHRONICLE



Pitts

Open mouth, insert foot. Maybe it doesn't happen often, but there are times when you have a knack for saying what's on your mind at precisely the wrong time. You can't un-say things, though, especially if you mean them, but as you'll see in the novel "Grant Park" by Leonard Pitts, Jr., at least those words won't kill you.

In his heart, Malcolm Toussaint was always an activist.

The son of a Memphis sanitary worker, Toussaint grew up seeing the lack of equality around him and he understood that higher education was a means of escape. Once at college, he grew an Afro, wrote angry pamphlets, and spoke his mind but, though he wasn't alone in his radicalism, he was expelled from white-man's school anyway.

That was February 1968; it was cold but so was life, which Toussaint learned the spring before he returned to college, chastened and wiser.

Four decades later, the award-winning newspaper columnist hadn't forgotten those days, which was why, early one morning, he snuck into his editor's office and quietly inserted a rant in the paper, a column that had

been rejected by his superiors, a tired-of-white-people column that Toussaint knew would kill his career.

As the paper's editor, Bob Carson was the first to reject the column so it especially stung that

Toussaint's action caused Bob to lose his job, too. Being fired was a shock, and there was more: not only was Toussaint missing, but an old girlfriend, Bob's first love whom he hadn't seen in years, was in Chicago with the Obama campaign and was hoping to have lunch with Bob.

That was fine. He had nothing else to do. Toussaint had seen to that, hadn't he?

For most of his life, Clarence Pym was bullied, abused, and didn't have many friends, but he had Dwayne and their carefully-laid plans for Something Big. Recently, they'd formed the White Resistance Army, and Dwayne said it was time for white men to take America back. It didn't matter who died - starting with that black writer from the newspaper.

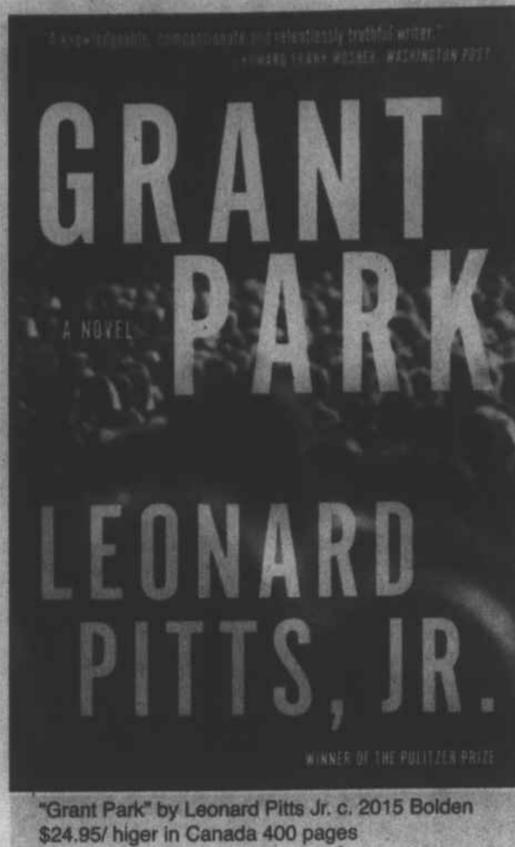
It's-only-a-book, it's-only-a-book ... that's what to keep reminding yourself here. It's only a book which, because you're immersed in history

and authentic events and because the fictional parts feel natural, is easy to forget when you're reading "Grant Park."

And then there are those thrills - gasping, mouth-gaping page-turners that author Leonard Pitts Jr. weaves through another realism: truthful, brutal plot-lines about racial issues of the last five decades, mulling over exactly how far we've really come. That makes this will-they-live-or-won't-they nail-biter into something that also made me think, and I absolutely loved it ... Until three pages from the end. There's where Pitts, Jr. inserted a tiny little thread that almost made me cry with frustration and cliché-repulsion.

I could cry now, in fact, but instead, I'll recommend this book with one caveat: stop before you finish it. If you can, you'll love it wholeheartedly with no disappointment. If you absolutely must read to the end, well, then liking "Grant Park," is for open discussion.

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was three years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 14,000 books.



Free tax returns provided at nonprofits

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Forsyth Free Tax is a part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program in which qualified volunteers prepare taxes for free for people making \$54,000 a year or less. EITC and VITA are vital asset building tools that help low-moderate income people build wealth.

Tax preparers are educated on tax credits and help people receive every tax credit for which they qualify.

Forsyth Free Tax also offers online tax services at www.myfreetaxes.com to individuals making less than \$62,000 who want to self-prepare their taxes.

Community sites are available throughout Forsyth County to provide free tax preparation services during tax season. These sites offer free tax preparation, Asset Building Counseling, and linkages to asset-building programs such as Experiment in Self-Reliance's Individual Development Account program, NC Saves, Financial Literacy Counseling, etc.

Certified volunteers are given the opportunity to pre-

pare 1040EZ, 1040A, and many other 1040 returns.

Tax sites will be at the following locations:

*Experiment in Self-Reliance, 3480 Dominion Street, Mondays-Fridays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

*Goodwill Industries, 2760 Peters Creek Parkway, Tuesdays, Thursdays 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

*Goodwill Industries, 2701 University Parkway, Wednesdays, Thursdays 4 p.m.-8 p.m.

*King Public Library, 101 Pilot View Drive, King, Thursdays 5-8 p.m.

*Malloy-Jordan Center/East Winston Library, 1110 East 7th Street, Saturdays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

*Mi Casa Servicios Hispano-Latino, 1705 Link Road, Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 5 pm.

*Career Connections and Prosperity Center South, 508 Waughtown Street, Mondays 9 am. -12 p.m., Wednesdays 4 p.m-8 p.m., Fridays 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Winston-Salem Transit Authority, 100 W. 5th Street,

Mondays 1 p.m.-5 p.m., Wednesdays 1 p.m.-5 p.m., Fridays 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

*Walnut Cove Senior Center, 308 Brooke Street, Walnut Cove, Mondays 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

*Winston-Salem Transit Authority, 100 West 5th Street, Monday-Tuesday 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Friday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Appointment only sites:

*Winston-Salem Federal Credit Union, 711 E Salem Avenue

*Walkertown Branch Library, 2969 Main Street, Walkertown

*Rural Hall Library, 7125 Broad Street, Rural Hall

People are asked to bring a picture ID, Social Security card for themselves and each dependent they are claiming, all W-2s and/or 1099s, employer ID number or SS number of childcare providers, and last year's tax returns if itemizing. If they want direct deposit of any refund, bring a check or savings account information.



BASEBALL

3/12 VS. CHOWAN 1PM/3PM

MCCRARY PARK, ASHEBORO, NC

3/13 VS. CHOWAN 1PM/3PM

BB&T BALLPARK, WINSTON-SALEM, NC

The Winston-Salem State University Department of Athletics

CONGRATULATES



TORY WOODBURY

WSSU Baseball Player

WSSU Hall of Fame

WSSU Hall of Fame



Friday, April 1 10:15 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Bowman-Gray Stadium

\$40.00 Early Ram Special/\$50.00 after March 15, 2016

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