

# Rick Bragg -- Journalist

Fay M. – Bethany BooksTalk March 11 2016 and Gere BooksTalk March 14 2016

Rick Bragg is an American journalist and writer known for non-fiction books, especially those about his family in Alabama.

**Born:** July 26, 1959 (age 56), Piedmont, AL

**Spouse:** Dianne Bragg (m. 2005)

**Parents:** Charles Bragg , Margaret Marie Bundrum Bragg

**Education:** Jacksonville State University, Harvard University

**Awards:** Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing, James Beard Award for Food Culture and Travel

**Early life** Bragg was born in the small city of Piedmont in northeastern Alabama and grew up in the small community of Possum Trot near Jacksonville. He credited his ability to write to listening to his family tell stories. He was raised primarily by his mother, as his father was an alcoholic and was almost never home. His relatives were also very involved in his young life, and greatly influenced his personal and emotional development.

**Career** Bragg worked at several newspapers (including major ones in Atlanta and St. Petersburg, FL) before joining the *New York Times* in 1994. He covered murders and unrest in Haiti as a metro reporter, then wrote about the Oklahoma City bombing, the Jonesboro, Arkansas, killings, and the Susan Smith trial as a national correspondent based in Atlanta

**Controversy** On May 28, 2003, after being given a two-week suspension for writing a story that was reported by an uncredited stringer,<sup>[2]</sup> Bragg resigned from the *New York Times*.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Later career** Bragg has taught writing in colleges and in newspaper newsrooms. He now works as a writing professor at the University of Alabama's journalism program in its College of Communication and Information Sciences.

**Awards** Bragg won the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing (recognizing his work at The New York Times), citing "his elegantly written stories about contemporary America".<sup>[1]</sup> He has received more than 50 writing awards in 20 years, including the American Society of Newspaper Editors' Distinguished Writing Award twice. In 1992, he was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University.

## Works (Works with notation \* were highlighted in this book talk)

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- Bragg, Rick (March 16, 1999). *All Over But the Shoutin'*. Random House Value Publishing \*
- Bragg, Rick (November 1, 1999). *Wooden Churches: A Celebration*. Algonquin Books..
- Bragg, Rick (August 28, 2001). *Somebody Told Me: The Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg*. Vintage; 1st Vintage Books edition. .
- Bragg, Rick (August 13, 2002). *Ava's Man*. Vintage; 1st Vintage Books edition \*
- Bragg, Rick (2003). *I Am a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \*
- Bragg, Rick (May 6, 2008). *The Prince of Frogtown*. Random House.
- Bragg, Rick (October 2009). *The Most They Ever Had*. MacAdam/Cage.
- Bragg, Rick (October 2014). *Jerry Lee Lewis: His Own Story*. HarperCollins.
- Bragg, Rick (September 2015) *Southern Journey: True Stories from the Heart of the South*. Oxmoor House \*