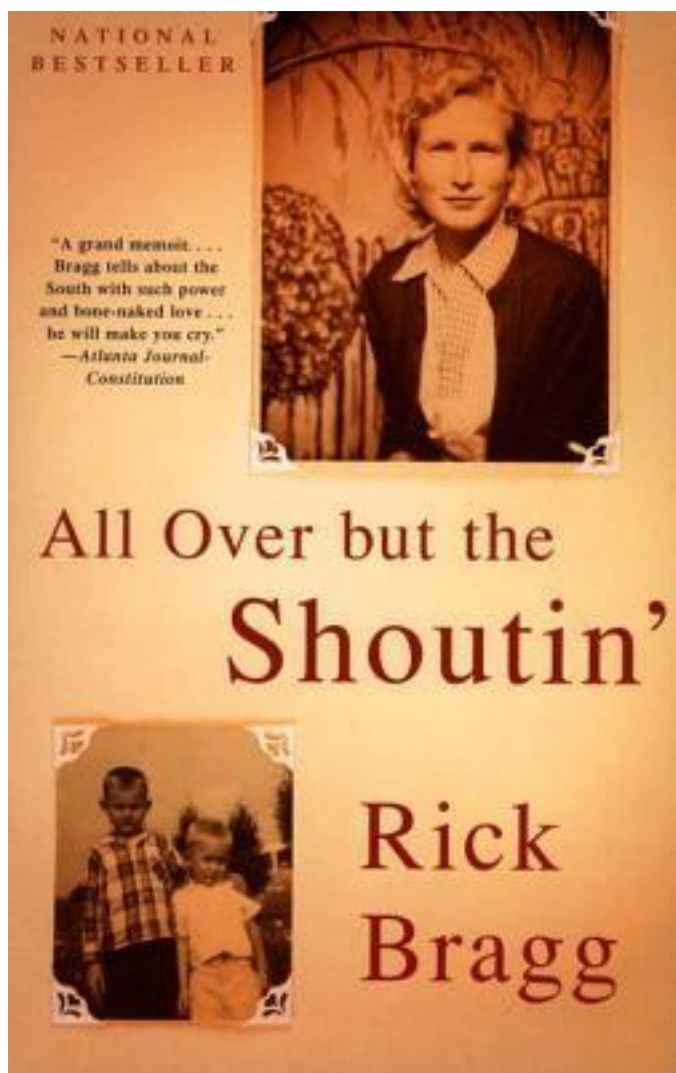

Rick Bragg

All Over but the Shoutin'



Title: All Over but the Shoutin'

Author: Rick Bragg

Format: ebook

Language: English

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Description

A *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year

This haunting, harrowing, gloriously moving recollection of a life on the American margin is the story of Rick Bragg, who grew up dirt-poor in northeastern Alabama, seemingly destined for either the cotton mills or the penitentiary, and instead became a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for *The New York Times*. It is the story of Bragg's father, a hard-drinking man with a murderous temper and the habit of running out on the people who needed him most.

But at the center of this soaring memoir is Bragg's mother, who went eighteen years without a new dress so that her sons could have school clothes and picked other people's cotton so that her children wouldn't have to live on welfare alone. Evoking these lives--and the country that shaped and nourished them--with artistry, honesty, and compassion, Rick Bragg brings home the love and suffering that lie at the heart of every family. The result is unforgettable.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Insightful reviews

Snotchocheez: A few weeks ago, I wrote a review of Annie Proulx' "memoir" (er, whine session) "Bird Cloud", where I commented that after reading it, she'd be the very last person I'd care to meet in person. The very polar opposite of that book (and that author's life-of-privilege bitching and moaning) is the exuberantly triumphant, life-affirming "All Over But the Shoutin'". After reading **this** memoir, not only do I want to meet Rick Bragg (its author), I want to spend hours picking his brain, shoot some hoops with him, go barhopping, play some Xbox, even (*cringe*) catch some NASCAR action at Talladega, meet his mom, eat grouper sandwiches on the gulf...

In short, it's pretty hard *not* to admire this guy after reading this. With an almost-aw shucks humility, he recounts his life from growing up dirt poor in Possum Trot (Jacksonville), Alabama, raised along with two brothers by their mother (who had to pick cotton in the nearby fields because the father abandoned the family)...and somehow, imbued with his mother's love and hard work ethic, was able grow up with his pride and dignity intact, get out of rural Alabama, follow his muse and become (eventually) a (Pulitzer Prize-award winning) journalist for the New York Times.

It's kinda hokey to say trite words like "This book changed my life!" However, I wish I had the opportunity to have read this memoir (written in 1997) before my own mother's passing; it's almost entirely an homage and a loving tribute to his mother, a lasting testament providing validation for the hard work and sacrifice his mother endured to give her boys a better life than she had. Which, essentially, is what my mom did for me (a sacrifice that I took for granted).

Just read it, you won't be sorry. (Make sure to read its equally excellent companion piece: "Ava's Man", which goes into detail about Mr. Bragg's mother's side of the family.)

Jimmie: I tried to read this book when it first came out. However, his writing was too strong, and my feelings were too vulnerable to take it on.

This time, I was successful and so appreciative. I love to read his writing in general, and believe as an early mentor said after a haughty, presumptuous editor asked Bragg who had taught him to write, Bragg should "tell 'em it was God."

The mannerisms and the speech of his people are spot-on. He knows of what he speaks and does not deny his belonging to his upbringing and those positive and negative whom he loved.

The tribute to his mother throughout the book would be hard to match, and when in the first few pages, he credits his mother as one who sacrificed her life "so that one of them (her sons) could climb up her backbone and escape the poverty and hopelessness that ringed them, free and clear." In that one sentence, he encapsulates the entirety of the book, but the pleasure of reading his words is not to be missed.

Eliza Victoria: Some people's memoirs you just don't want to read, but if I ever get to meet Rick Bragg I will thank him forever. How generous of him to share these stories. A journalist by profession, Bragg talks about the death of strangers: those that get shot standing behind counters in New York City, the peeled faces of Haitians, the riots in Miami. The bombing of a daycare center in Oklahoma City, the Susan Smith case regarding a mother that drowned her own children. About his personal life, Bragg bares all: his life of squalor and pain in Alabama, his mother's back-breaking work, his absent father's death, the many girls he has had in his life due to his inability to commit, his days in Harvard as a Nieman fellow in 1992, his rise to fame in 1996 when he won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing while working for the New York Times, and his belief, in his heart of hearts, that he is like his father – cold and mean, and ultimately lonely. I marvel both at his honesty and his way with words. This is one of my favorite moments (and one that got me teary-eyed):

I thanked him and made to leave, but he stopped me with a hand on my arm and said wait, that ain't all, that he had some other things for me. He motioned to three big cardboard egg cartons stacked against one wall.

Inside was the only treasure I truly have ever known.

I had grown up in a house in which there were only two books, the King James Bible and the spring seed catalog. But here, in these boxes, were dozens of hardback copies of everything from Mark Twain to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. There was a water-damaged Faulkner, and the nearly complete set of Edgar Rice Burroughs's Tarzan. There was poetry and trash, Zane Grey's Riders of the Purple Sage, and a paperback with two naked women on the cover. There was a tiny, old copy of Arabian Nights, threadbare Hardy Boys, and one Hemingway. He had bought most of them at a yard sale, by the box or pound, and some at a flea market. He did not even know what he was giving me, did not recognize most of the writers. "Your momma said you still liked to read," he said.

There was Shakespeare. My father did not know who he was, exactly, but he had heard the

name. He wanted them because they were pretty, because they were wrapped in fake leather, because they looked like rich folks' books. I do not love Shakespeare, but I still have those books. I would not trade them for a gold monkey.

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Kathy: I had a love-hate dating with this book, and i've now divorced it approximately midway through. he is a beautiful storyteller, yet i discovered his tales did numerous undesirable issues for me:- bolstered all my destructive stereotypes approximately southerners.- Made me believe helpless within the face of sophistication barriers, which nobody in his e-book fairly overcame. Even him.- jogged my memory how a lot I dislike memoirs. He claims it's not a sob story, however the fact doesn't aid his claim.Now i will be able to come again to interpreting "Edgar Sawtelle," which the library acquired extra copies of. Hurrah!

Caley Rogers : This publication is full of marvelous imagery and is the memior of recent York occasions write Rick Bragg. here is a quotation: "This isn't really an immense book... someone may well inform it, a person who had a momma who went eighteen years and not using a new costume in order that her sons can have university clothes, who picked cotton in different people's fields and ironed different people's outfits and wiped clean the mess in different people's houses, in order that her youngsters did not have to survive welfare alone, in order that one among them might climb up her spine and get away the poverty and hopelessness that ringed them, loose and clean."

Delta Yarbrough: might be my favourite all time book. And it really is Bragg now not Broggs. existence within the poverty ridden south informed by way of this generations Faulkner

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