

Alice Randall is a New York Times best-selling novelist, award-winning songwriter, and a popular essayist. A graduate of Harvard University, she has lectured across the country. Her fiction has been, and is currently being, taught at a wide range of universities, including: Harvard, Princeton, The University of Virginia, Wesleyan, and Vanderbilt. She is studied in a variety of contexts: as a satirist, as a southern writer, as an African-American writer, and as a writer concerned with the nature of the feminine, both in text and in American life. Writer-in-Residence at Vanderbilt University with a primary appointment in AADS she holds a secondary appointment in English and serves as Faculty Head of Stambaugh House on the Ingram Commons.

**PUBLISHED NOVELS:**

*The Wind Done Gone*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

*Pushkin and the Queen of Spades*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

*Rebel Yell*. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2009.

*Ada's Rules*. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2012.

**PUBLISHED CHILDREN'S FICTION:**

*The Diary of B.B. Bright, Possible Princess*. (With Caroline Randall Williams) Nashville: Turner Publishing, 2012.

**PUBLISHED NON-FICTION:**

*My Country Roots*. (With Carter and Courtney Little) Nashville: Naked Ink, 2006.

**PUBLISHED ARTICLES and CHAPTERS, A SELECTION:**

"Washington's Black Elite." *Washingtonian Magazine* May 1982.

"Ah-ha Moment." *O Magazine* April 2001.

"The Wind Done Gone — From Scars to a Heart." *The Los Angeles Times* 2 May 2001.

Review of *Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Folk-tales from the Gulf States* by Zora Neale Hurston. *Elle* December 2001.

Review of *Interesting Women: Stories* by Andrea Lee. *Radcliffe Quarterly* Summer 2003. "A fresh wind blows across Harpeth Hall this graduation season" Editorial. *The Tennessean*: 25 May 2005.

"The Unstoppable Missy Elliott." *Elle* July 2005.

"Touch of Eva." Review of *Bliss* by Danyel Smith. *Elle* August, 2005.

"Embrace Disaster: What I've Learned." *Elle* October 2005.

"What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas." *The Honeymoon's Over: True Stories of Love, Marriage, and Divorce*. Ed, Andrea Chapin and Sally C. Wofford-Girand. Warner Books. (February) 2007. Reprinted *Elle* March 2007.

"The Meta of Michelle" *Elle* September, 2007. Profile of Michelle Obama.

"His Voice for the Underprivileged was Strong even when his Body Wasn't" Editorial. *The Tennessean*. 19 December 2007.

Review of *Gentleman Jigger*, A novel by Richard Bruce Nugent. *Los Angeles Times*. 24 February 2008.

"Barack in the Dirty, Dirty South." *The Speech: Race and Barack Obama's 'A More Perfect Union'*. Ed., T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting. Bloomsbury USA. August 2009.

"The Sweet Spot" *Oxford American*. The Music Issue. December 2009. Discussion of

black Opry star Lynda Martell.

"The Gritty South" Oxford American. The Food Issue. March 2010. Essay on Olive and Sinclair Chocolate.

"A Letter from Harper Lee." Garden and Gun. June/July 2010.

Why Black Bedtime Stories Matter More. AOL. Black Voices Channel. February 2011.

Out of Safe Hiding. Reflections on Shelby Foote. Chapter 16. April 2011.

Sunflowers and Yellow Roses: Motherlove. AOL. Black Voices Channel. May 2011.

Black History is Sweet Potatoes and Peanuts Huffington Post. February 2012.

"Black Women and Fat" Sunday New York Times the Opinion Pages, May 5, 2012.

"My Soul to Keep, My Weight to Lose" Essence Magazine. September 2012.

"About the Size of It" The Sunday Times (London), July 29, 2012.

### **RECORDED SONGS, A SELECTION:**

Randall, Alice, Mark O'Connor, and Harry Stinson. "The Ballad of Sally Anne." The New Nashville Cats. Perf. Mark O'Connor. Audio CD. Warner Bros. Records. 1991.

Randall, Alice, and Ralph Murphy. "Big Dream." The Thing Called Love: Music From The Paramount Motion Picture Soundtrack. Perf. Samantha Mathis. Audio CD. Giant Records / WEA. 1993.

Randall, Alice, and Adrienne Young. "Blinded by Stars." Plow to the End of the Row. Perf. Adrienne Young & Little Sadie. Audio CD. Addie Belle. 2004.

Randall, Alice, and Walter Hyatt. "Get the Hell Out of Dodge." Music Train. Perf. Walter Hyatt. Audio CD. Sugar Hill Records. 1993

Randall, Alice, and Mark Sanders. "Girls Ride Horses Too." A Place Called Love. Perf. Judy Rodman. Audio CD. MTM Records. 1987.

Randall, Alice, and Steve Earle. "Halfway Home." Pre-Guitar Town Demos. Perf. Steve Earle. Audio CD. c.1984.

Randall, Alice, and Michael Woody. "A Hundred Years of Solitude." The Woody's. Perf. The Woody's. Audio CD. Rounder. 1998.

Randall, Alice, and Courtney Little. "Little Red Rider." Samuel Springs Children's Music Perf. Courtney Little. Audio CD. Lord Harry Music. 2005.

Randall, Alice, Carol Etheridge, and Mark Sanders. "Many Mansions." Many Mansions. Perf. Moe Bandy. Audio CD. Curb Records. 1995.

Randall, Alice, and Pat Alger. "Missing in Action." Notes and Grace Notes. Perf. Pat Alger. Audio CD. Capitol Records. 1994.

Randall, Alice, Carol Etheridge, and Miriam Silver. "My Home Town Boy," All in Love. Perf. Marie Osmond. Audio CD. Curb Special Markets. 1990.

Randall, Alice and Matraca Berg. "The Resurrection." Sunday Morning to Saturday Night. Perf. Matraca Berg. Audio CD. Rising Tide. 1997.

Randall, Alice and Matraca Berg. "The Resurrection." Speed of Life. Perf. Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. Audio CD. NGDB Records. 2009.

Randall, Alice, Mark Sanders, and Verlon Thompson. "Small Towns (Are Smaller for Girls)." Cornerstone. Perf. Holly Dunn. Audio CD. MTM Records. 1987.

Randall, Alice, and Steve Earle. "She Can't Break My Heart." Uncut Gems. Perf. Steve Earle. Audio CD. Warner Brothers Records. 2001.

Randall, Alice, and Radney Foster. "Went For a Ride." Del Rio, Texas 1959. Perf. Radney Foster. Audio CD. Arista 1992. Dual Tone 2001.

Randall, Alice, and Bruce Bouton. "Who's Minding the Garden." Wings of Victory. Perf. Glen Cambell. Audio CD. New Haven. 1992.

Randall, Alice, and Matraca Berg."Xxx's and Ooo's (An American Girl)." Thinkin' About You. Perf. Trisha Yearwood. Audio CD. UMG Recordings, Inc. 1995.

Randall, Alice, and Steve Earle. "You Tear Me Up." Uncut Gems. Perf. Steve Earle. Audio CD. Warner Brothers Records. 2001.

### **PRODUCED SCREENPLAYS, A SELECTION:**

"Is There Life Out There?" (Music Video). For My Broken Heart. Perf. Reba McEntire. Screenplay by Alice Randall. 1991. ACM Video of the Year.

"XXX's & Ooo's." Screenplay by Alice Randall and John Wilder. Dir. Allan Arkush. Perf. Debrah Farentino, Andrea Parker, Nia Peeples, and Susan Walters. 1994.

### **PUBLIC ADDRESSES, A SELECTION SINCE 2000:**

Ann Arbor, Michigan — Shaman Drum Bookshop.

Atlanta, Georgia — Margaret Mitchell House; American Bar Association Forum; SOLINET Annual Meeting. AWP Conference.

Atlanta, Georgia — Fulton Library.

Boston, Massachusetts — With Robert Birbaum for the on-line publication, "Identity Theory." Cambridge, Massachusetts — Radcliffe Commemorative Address 2006 (Harvard University). Charleston, North Carolina — Closing address to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, '02.

Charlotte, North Carolina — Novello Festival of the Book (Charlotte Public Library).

Chicago, Illinois — Chicago Historical Society.

Charlottesville, Virginia-- Virginia Festival of the Book 2010;University of Virginia 2010.

Clarksville, Tennessee — Ft. Campbell Health & Wellness Fair 2012.

Cleveland, Mississippi — Crosstie Festival 2011.

Cleveland, Ohio — Case Western Reserve.

College Station, Pennsylvania--Penn State, African-American Novel Conference 2009. Key Note.

Columbus, Georgia — Public Library 2011

Dallas, Texas — Black Academy of Arts and Letters.

Dallas, Texas. — Tulisoma: The South Dallas Book Fair Breakfast Keynote sponsored by Dallas Public Library.

Detroit, Michigan — Main Library.

Durham, North Carolina — North Carolina Festival of Books, 2006 (at the Gothic Reading Room of Duke University).

Fort Wayne, Indiana — The Lincoln Museum.

Geneseo, New York — State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo.

Knoxville, Tennessee — University of Tennessee.

Lexington, Kentucky — Joseph-Beth Bookstore.

Lafayette, Louisiana — Significant Voices Literary Series.

Little Rock, Arkansas — Arkansas Literary Festival 2010; Philander Smith College 2010.

Los Angeles, California — Eso Wan Books.

Memphis, Tennessee — National Civil Rights Museum; Memphis Black Writers Conference.  
Nashville, Tennessee — English Speaking Union, National Meeting; Fisk University; Les Gemmes Literary Luncheon, Sigma Pi Phi Boule; Nashville Public Library Grand Opening; National Council of Teachers of English Annual Conference; Tennessee State University; Southern Festival of Books; Vanderbilt University. The Boule. Cheekwood. Tennessee State Fair. Go Red For Women Leadership Breakfast. A Women's Thanksgiving. Delta Sigma Theta Graduate Chapter. Harpeth Hall.  
Norfolk, Virginia--Old Dominion University.  
Montgomery, Alabama — Book Festival 2012. Book Festival 2013.  
New Orleans, Louisiana — Tennessee Williams / New Orleans Festival.  
New Orleans, Louisiana — Essence Music Festival 2012.  
New York; New York — Medgar Evers College.  
Orlando, Florida — National Association of Black Journalists Conference. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — Free Library of Pennsylvania.  
Orlando, Florida — Links Annual Conference 2012.  
Oxford, Mississippi--Southern Foodways Alliance Symposium 2009.Oxford Conference for the Book 2013.  
Princeton, New Jersey — Princeton University.  
San Francisco, California — San Francisco Public Library African-American Center.  
Seattle, Washington — Elliot Bay Book Company  
Sewanee, Tennessee —The University of the South.  
Selma, Alabama--Women's Empowerment Health Summit, Bridge Crossing Jubilee.  
St. Louis, Missouri — Left Bank Books.  
Tuskegee, Alabama — Tuskegee University 2009;The Oaks.  
Washington, D.C. — Metropolitan AME Church.  
Washington, D.C. — Black Caucus Legislative Conference 2012.

**COURSES TAUGHT or CO-TAUGHT, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY:**

Beginning Fiction Workshop  
Country Lyric in American Culture  
Blood Money: the Stories of Coal  
Soul Food: in Text, As Text  
Southern Food: in Text as Text  
Real to Reel African American Representation on Film  
Bedtime in the Briar Patch: African American Children's Literature  
Reading and Writing Black America

**WEBINARS TAUGHT or CO-TAUGHT:**

*SOPHE Partners in Community Health: Creating Alliances to Help African-American Women Improve Their Health*  
Presented under the auspices of NIH, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease, Sisters Together  
June 2013 available for credit online to SOPHE members through 2014 (with Leslie Curtis, NIH)

**TV / RADIO APPEARANCES, A SELECTION:**

A Word on Words, interviewed by John Seigenthaler, PBS.  
Black Authors Network, interviewed by Ella Curry  
Conversations with Byllye and Niga, Black Women's Health Imperative, Blogtalk radio  
CNN Live This Morning, CNN.  
Dennis Miller Show, CNBC.  
First Wednesdays: Conversations with Byllye and Ngina  
Fox News Live, Fox News Channel.  
Fresh Air, interviewed by Terry Gross, NPR.  
Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution Day Google Hangout lead by Jamie Oliver, Google+ Hangout.  
Morning Edition, interviewed by Cheryl Corley, NPR.  
Paul Mooney Panel. BET.  
Tell Me More, interviewed by Michel Martin, NPR.  
Talk of the Nation, interviewed by Neal Conan, NPR.  
The Early Show, CBS.  
The Evening Exchange, interviewed by Kojo Nnamdi, Howard University Television.  
The Tavis Smiley Show, PRI.  
The Today Show, NBC.  
The Wil LaVeist Show  
The Jennifer Keitt Show  
Tom Joyner Morning Show  
What's the 411, interviewed by Sharon Kay, WFSK.  
Written Conversation with Alice Randall, interviewed by Michelle Gipson, Blogtalk radio.  
Voices from the Drum, interviewed by Gloria Taylor, WCLM.

**PROFILES OF ALICE RANDALL, A SELECTION:** Boston Globe, by David Mehegan, June 2004.

Nashville Scene, by Carrington Fox, May 2012.  
New York Times, by Julie Salamon, March 2004.  
Oxford America, interviewed by Amy Ellington, July 2012.  
The Tennessean, by Jake Old, July 2012.

**ONGOING SERVICE:**

Jamie Oliver Food Ambassador for Nashville  
Center for Southern Studies, University of Mississippi. Advisory Board Member.

**AWARDS, A SELECTION:**

Silver Circle, 2008. Inducted (along with 10 others including Reba McIntire and Lyle Lovett) into ASCAP's Silver Circle. Ryman Auditorium.  
ASCAP #1 Club Award, for "XXX's and 000's (An American Girl)" on the Billboard Hot Country Singles Chart and the Radio & Records National Airplay Chart. 1994.  
"BWC 2002 Literary Award" from Memphis Black Writers Conference and Southern Film Festival.  
Hurston/Wright Legacy Award — Short list. 2002.

2004 Myers Outstanding Book Awards — Honorable Mention (Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights), for Pushkin and the Queen of Spades.

NAACP Image Award — Finalist. 2002. 2013.

Neuharth Free Spirit Award, 2001.

"Outstanding Fiction" Award from The 1st Annual Mixed Media Watch Image Awards for Pushkin and the Queen of Spades.

Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letter, Fisk University, 2012

National Association of Black Journalist 2013 Salute to Magazine Excellence Finalist in the category Commentary/Essay

Dr. Lucius Outlaw Outstanding Faculty Award, BSA, Vanderbilt University. 2013

Dr. Jimmie Lewis Franklin Award for Outstanding Faculty Member. Black Graduates Recognition Ceremony, Vanderbilt University. 2013.

### **MISCELLANY:**

- Randall was born in Detroit, Michigan and grew up in Washington, D.C.
- In 2005 Starbucks began printing Randall's words: "Mother-love is not inevitable. The good mother is a great artist ever creating beauty out of chaos" on their cups. Since then an estimated 5 million coffee cups with her words have been, and continue to be, distributed. The quote has been posted on and commented upon in over fifty blogs.
- At Harvard, Randall (A.B., cum laude, '81) studied American Literature with Alan Heimert, Shakespeare with Harry Levin, film theory with Vlada Petrie, and screenwriting with Alan Trustman. She also completed an independent study for credit with Julia Child.
- Randall is credited with being the only black woman to write a number-one country song ("XXX's and 000's, An American Girl," named in The Top 500 Country Songs of All Time).
- Randall's Pushkin and the Queen of Spades appeared on both The Washington Post's "The best of 2004, brought to you by our eclectic band of reviewers" and Los Angeles Times's "The Best Books of 2004" lists.
- Randall's lyrics were woven into the plot of Peter Bogdanovich's film "The Thing Called Love", starring River Phoenix and Sandra Bullock.
- Randall wrote multiple drafts of Their Eyes Were Watching God, for Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Productions, which aired on ABC. The final draft was written by Suzan-Lori Parks.
- Randall began her first-ever book tour with a talk at the Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, D.C., a stop on the Underground Railroad.
- Randall appeared on Ebony magazine's "Most Intriguing Blacks of 2002" list.
- Randall's work has been referenced on the television programs Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?; The Gilmore Girls; Saturday Night Live; and The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. She and her writings have been discussed in the glossy pages of Time, Newsweek, People, Entertainment Weekly, Ebony, Elle, Essence, and O, and in the matte pages of The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, Boston Globe, The Chicago Tribune, and USA Today, among other publications.
- The article, "Circum-Atlantic Superabundance: Milk as World-Making in Alice Randall and Kara Walker" written by Patricia Yaeger, appeared in a special issue (December 2006) of American Literature.

- At the 56th Annual Conference of the South Central Modern Language Association, held in Memphis, in November of 2007 a “Round Table Discussion of the Work of Alice Randall” was presented.
- The title of her first novel has moved into common usage to indicate significant racial change.
- Her first book-length work of non-fiction, *My Country Roots: The Ultimate MP3 Guide to America's Outsider Music* (co-written with Carter and Courtney Little) is a compendium of interlocking playlists with an introduction by George Jones.
- The 2009 May/June *American Songwriter* magazine compilation CD “Country Way,” described as “a hand-picked collection of the best of everything Country from mainstream to Alt-country/Americana, to vintage Bluegrass and Country standards,” includes “The Resurrection” a song written by Randall with Matraca Berg recorded by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.
- Randall’s most recent speech titles include: *Coded Language and Other Cakewalks; Gender and Sexuality in The Wind Done Gone; On Brown v. Board, Pushkin and the Queen of Spades, and Segregated Education in Texas; Parody, Palimpsest and Pain; Re-inventing Dixie by Over-writing Gone With the Wind; Reading to Survive: A novelist recalls Reading as a Child; The Female Physician in American Literature: A Second Opinion on Jewett, Howells, Phelps, and Percy; and The Metaphysical Poetry of the Country Lyric.*
- Randall lives in Nashville, Tennessee with her husband David Ewing. Her daughter, Caroline Randall Williams, is a Cave Canem Fellow who graduated from Harvard in 2010 and is currently working on her MFA at Ole Miss.

#### **AUTHOR STATEMENT:**

My work is characterized by an interest in text and contexts where issues of race and identity and language and intimacy converge. I am particularly interested in depictions of the African-American experience of: motherhood, reading and being southern. In my work I balance these concerns with the questions: Is there an African-American experience of motherhood? Of reading? Is there “southern-ness” that is not inherently African? Above and beyond ponderings of race, I am interested in defining, examining, and depicting, “the good mother.”

I write novels that comment on other novels, and on other readers. I write in my mother tongue, the black English I learned as a child, in an enclave of Detroit inhabited by refugees from Jim Crow Alabama. I write in a language I understand to be “the vanishing language of an illiterate people.” I am concerned with the questions and problems of discovering fact, discerning history, and making meaning when cultures that privilege written language collide with cultures that give primacy to oral language. I am deeply intrigued by the problems and possibilities that began to arise when southern rural blacks migrated to the industrial North, including the particular difficulties encountered by black Americans when they seek to return home.

My abiding interest in and appreciation of country music song lyric and southern foodways inform my understanding of the South and is informed by my understanding of the South. More and more my subject has become the black woman's body.