

## Pulitzer Glow

David Garrow:  
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Fundamentally  
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For Him'



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By Lloyd Grove  
Washington Post Staff Writer

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**D**avid J. Garrow said yesterday he has been "very deeply tickled" by the reception for his biography of Martin Luther King Jr.

The book, "Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference," has been raved about in reviews over the last five months, was honored with the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award on April 9, and yesterday won the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for biography.

"I feel very pleased, very honored and very lucky," Garrow said from Seattle, where he has been on spring break from teaching duties at the City College of New York and the City University Graduate Center. "I don't know what I'm going to do to celebrate. I'm not the sort of person who goes out and buys champagne or something."

"He is a workaholic," said his wife, Susan Foster Newcomer, who spent much of yesterday trying without success to reach him. "He put in eight hours a day, 6½ days a week on that book . . . What does he do for a good time? Research! I kid you not."

Garrow—at 33 "a mere whippersnapper," according to Newcomer—finally got the news late yesterday when he called his publisher, William Morrow and Company Inc., from a pay phone after stepping off a ferry boat on Orcas Island, off the Washington coast.

He labored on the book, his third, for close to seven years, crisscrossing the country to interview more than 700 people. But it wasn't until 1981, Garrow said, that he began to master his subject.

"That was the first time I came to feel emotionally close to him," he said. "That was when I developed a clear sense of understanding him in human terms. He was fundamental-

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## David Garrow's Pulitzer

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ly a humble man who had no egotistical desire to be a leader or public figure at all. He felt basically that he was being drafted or being called to be the spokesperson for a movement. I'm not sure I would say I identified with him. I think I developed a great emotional empathy for him."

Garrow, a native of New Bedford, Mass., and the son of a corporate executive, grew up in Alexandria and in Greenwich, Conn., in an environment far removed from the civil rights

movement. "My only clear memory of it, and I hesitate to say this, is when we were living in Alexandria and my father came home and remarked on the difficult traffic situation because of some big demonstration."

Garrow can't remember which demonstration, but it wasn't King's legendary speech at the Lincoln Memorial in the summer of 1963. He added, "I have come to firmly believe that the fact that I am the age I am and don't have any firsthand knowledge of the civil rights

movement" gave him an advantageous perspective on the subject.

He said his next project might well be "a big book on the FBI," and he plans to use his cash awards—\$1,000 for the Pulitzer and \$2,500 for the RFK—to file Freedom of Information Act requests to continue his research. "I don't know much about the early history of the FBI," he said. "So I hope to take this summer, and read all of that."

Fortuitously, in a few weeks he will be up for a tenure vote at City College, where he is an associate professor of political science. "I figure I'll give my dean a call in the morning," Garrow said.