

## Book Review: 'My Long Trip Home — A Family Memoir' by Mark Whitaker

By Kam Williams  
Special To *The Skanner News*

As managing editor of CNN Worldwide, Mark Whitaker is currently in charge of content and reporting for the world's largest global television network. Previously, he made his

tory as Newsweek's first African American editor-in-chief.

To his credit, Whitaker has achieved his phenomenal, professional success in spite of being raised in a very dysfunctional family by parents as different as night and day, literally and figuratively. His mother, Jeanne, was in her

fourth year as a French professor at Swarthmore College when she found herself being pursued by one of her students, Syl.

Since this was America in the 1950s, perhaps of more significance than their age difference was the fact that she was white, conventional and the daughter of

devout Christian missionaries while he was black, immature, and a relatively-bohemian free-love advocate. Nonetheless, the unlikely couple secretly embarked on a torrid affair and wed just a couple of months after his graduation.

Reflecting both a reporter's painstaking attention to detail and

a Prodigal Son's sincere search for closure and redemption, "My Long Trip Home" is a riveting, revealing, and heartbreaking memoir affirming the potential of even the messiest of lives to blossom belatedly into something satisfying and beautiful.

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