

## **Margaret Rozga Biographical Statement**

University of Wisconsin - Waukesha Professor of English Emerita Dr. Margaret Rozga creates poetry from her ongoing concern for social justice issues. She was a participant in Milwaukee's marches for fair housing and later married civil rights leader, Father James Groppi.

Her book, *Two Hundred Nights and One Day* (Benu Press 2009), tells the story of the 1967-68 Milwaukee fair housing struggle. This book was awarded a bronze medal in poetry in the 2009 Independent Publishers Book Awards and named an outstanding achievement in poetry for 2009 by the Wisconsin Library Association.

Dr. Rozga is also the author of *Though I Haven't Been to Baghdad* (2012), *Justice Freedom Herbs* (2015), and *Pestiferous Questions: A Life in Poems* (2017). She has been awarded a creative writer's fellowship at the American Antiquarian Society and has been a resident at the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology and at the Ragdale Foundation.

Dr. Rozga served as convener of the March On Milwaukee Coordinating Committee that planned events to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Milwaukee's Open Housing Marches.

As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary projects honoring Milwaukee's fair housing marches, Dr. Rozga served as editor of a poetry chapbook anthology, *Where I Want to Live: Poems for Fair and Affordable Housing*. Also as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events, she convened a housing task force that supported the successful initiative to close a loophole in Milwaukee County's fair housing law so that it now covers people with rent assistance vouchers. She helped promote the community-wide Book Read Project focused on Richard Rothstein's *The Color of Law*.

She writes monthly columns for the *Los Angeles Art News* and *Milwaukee Neighborhood News* and is a poetry and civil rights consultant to community organizations and programs that empower young writers and artists.