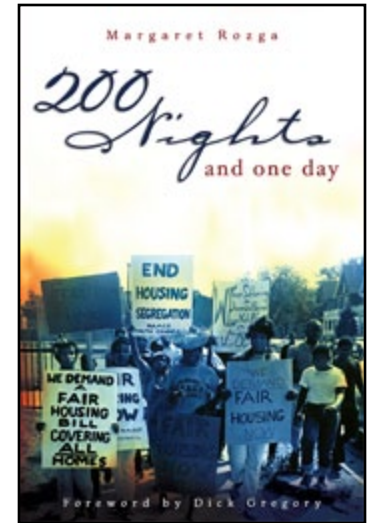


Discussion Questions

for *Two Hundred Nights and One Day*

by Margaret Rozga

1. In your opinion, was the housing issue most a spiritual, legal, economic, or social problem? Why?
 - Which way did Fr. Groppi primarily approach it? Give examples.
 - Which way did the city council members approach it? Give examples.
 - Which way did the young people in the movement approach it? Give examples.
2. How were the roots of discrimination in the northern civil rights struggle different or the same compared to the southern struggle? How was the outward manifestation of discrimination different or the same?
3. Are there struggles similar to the struggle for fair housing going on today? Compare and contrast a current civil rights issue to the issue of equal housing and the responses of the various stakeholders involved.
4. In your opinion, was it prejudice, fear, apathy, or something else that caused the city council members to oppose the housing law reform? Write up the position of a city council member opposed to equal housing as honestly as you can.
5. Would a violent protest have been more effective than the peaceful marches? Explain why Fr. Groppi might have chosen the method of nonviolent protest instead of retaliating against violence with more violence.
6. What lasting mark on our society was made by the events described in the poems? Provide evidence of the impact as you see it.
7. In the book, why is crossing the 16th Street viaduct so significant a metaphor?
 - In what way was the line that the protesters crossed physical and political?
 - In what way was it emotional or spiritual?
 - What psychological effect does crossing such a line have on the one walking across?
 - Where is a line for you that you aren't supposed to cross? Do you ever cross it? Why or why not?
 - In any area of your life (your family, your job, your religion, your



ISBN: 978-0-981563-7-0
Discussion questions
developed by Sydney James
©2009 Benu Press

politics, etc.), who are the “dangerous others” for you and what line do you expect them not to cross? Are you right to feel that way? Explain why or why not.

8. Is poetry a good method to communicate the issues explored in *200 Nights and One Day*? Why or why not?
9. What poetic techniques does the author use to create a feeling of immediate, concrete reality in the poems?
10. In “Prologue to Milwaukee,” do you agree that “history remembers the dream, forgets/nightmares”? Why or why not?
11. In “Arrest the White Girls,” what were the real dangers for the girls, both at the time of the poem and in the future suggested by it?
12. Describe the viewpoints of three of the voices speaking in the book. Which is most compelling to you and why?
13. In “Peggy: Crossing the 16th Street Viaduct,” one of the lines is “How had I walked these streets for years/and never seen the ugly?” What is the answer to that question?
14. Is there ugly on the streets you know?
15. Is it visible or invisible to most people who walk on the streets?
16. In “School Lessons,” the slogan “Freedom Now” is said by the school to be incendiary. Allow that there could be truth to that and describe what was being burned up, burned down, or burned away by it.
17. Do you find poetry in “The Impregnable Poetry of the Supreme Court”? What makes the poem poetic or not?
18. The book ends with “Another generation sits here waiting.” What does the speaker of the poem believe they are waiting for? What do you believe they are waiting for?