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Final Chapters [Margaret Garb obituary]

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Final chapters

BY TIMOTHY J. GILFOYLE

Margaret Garb (1962-2018), a Midland Authors member and an internationally recognized historian of race and the American city, died on Dec. 15, 2018. Known to colleagues and friends as "Maggie," Garb began her professional career as a journalist, went back to school to complete a Ph.D., and was a professor of history and co-director of the Prison Education Project at Washington University in St. Louis when she passed away.

Garb was born in Trenton, New Jersey, to a family of activists. Her father, Isaac S. Garb, served as Bucks County, Pennsylvania, judge for more than 30 years and was a staunch proponent of prison reform. Her mother, Joan E. Garb, was active in the local Democratic Party and Planned Parenthood.

Garb attended the Buckingham Friends School and the George School. Her inter-

est in cooking led to her enrollment at the Cordon Bleu in Paris, where she studied pastries. She eventually completed her B.A. in comparative religion at the University of Vermont.

Garb then worked as a journalist, first covering the Chicago Police Department and then writing for *The New York Times* and *In These Times*.

Garb earned a master's degree in history from the University of California, San Diego, and her doctorate from Columbia University in New York, where she studied with Eric Foner and Betsy Blackmar.

Many of Garb's numerous publications focused on Chicago, most notably her books *City of*

American Dreams: A History of Home Ownership and Housing Reform, Chicago 1871-1919 (2005) and *Freedom's Ballot: African-American Political Struggles in Chicago from Abolition to the Great Migration* (2014).

Both were published by the University of Chicago Press, and they made Garb a

leading figure in American urban history.

Garb was also an adviser to the The Chicago Elections Project, an ongoing digital history collaboration on the electoral history of the city, which was inspired by *Freedom's Ballot*. At the time of her death, she was working on a book on the history of poverty from the Civil War to the Reagan era.

Garb joined the Washington University faculty in 2001, where she taught courses on social reform, the history of poverty, and urban history. In 2014, Ms. Garb and Professor of Drama Robert Henke founded the Prison Education Project; the first students graduated from the program in 2019.

Garb was also the recipient of fellowships from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the Collegium de Lyon in France, and the Fulbright Fellowship Program.

Garb is survived by her husband, Mark Pegg, also a professor of history; a daughter, Eva Garb; and siblings, Emily and Charles Garb.



Margaret Garb

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