



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Media and Public Relations
Press Release
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Virtual Event: Novel that Traverses the Terrain of the Russian-Jewish Experience to be Discussed

MAHWAH, N.J. – Professor of Literature at Ramapo College Lisa Williams will discuss her recently published book, *Forget Russia* (Tailwinds Press, 2020) with Natalia Santamaría Laorden, associate professor of Spanish at Ramapo College. Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies Director Michael A. Riff will act as moderator. The program will be delivered virtually via Zoom on Thursday, March 18 at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Registration to attend via Zoom is at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/novel-delving-into-the-russian-jewish-experience-to-be-discussed-tickets-140699503001>

Forget Russia is a strong, stirring tale about Anna, a college student who during a semester in Moscow discovers details about her family that will change her life. She knows that her grandparents, who met and married in America, willingly returned to Russia in 1931 with their little girls—Anna’s mother and her younger sister—then fled back to the United States. The book’s narration alternates among time periods revealing painful memories of the past and experiences of the present that shape the future. Williams is an experienced writer who uses her craft to mold a passionate story about being part of a family with a rich and complicated history as well as coming of age in contemporary Russia and America.

Lisa Williams (aka L. Bordetsky-Williams) has also published the memoir, *Letters to Virginia Woolf*; *The Artist as Outside in the Novels of Toni Morrison and Virginia Woolf*; and three poetry chapbooks: *The Eighth Phrase*, *Sky Studies*, and *In the Early Morning Calling*. Williams holds a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Santamaría Laorden received her Ph.D. in Romance Languages from Harvard University in 2007. Since then, she has published in the literary journals *Decimonónica*, *Letras Hispánicas* and *Cuadernos Americanos* and translated for *Asclepio*, the journal on the history of medicine and science published by the Spanish National Research Council. Her study on the fin-de-siècle discourse of decadence, disease and regeneration was also chosen to represent Spanish and Latin American literature in the volume *Decadence, Degeneration and The End: Studies in The European fin-de-siècle* by Palgrave Macmillan in 2014. Most recently, in 2018 and 2020, she received two Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign language federal grants from the Department of Education of the United States to develop an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Spanish for Health Care and Human Services. In 2020, she was also the finalist in the language innovation award, in the social/racial justice category, given by the American Association of University Supervisors, Coordinator and Language Directors.

For information or to request disability-related accommodations for this event, please contact holgen@ramapo.edu or call 201-684-7409.

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Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state's premier public liberal arts college and is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. The College is ranked #1 among New Jersey public institutions by College Choice, has been named one of the 50 Most Beautiful College Campuses in America by *Condé Nast Traveler*, and is recognized as a top college by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Kiplinger's*, Princeton Review and *Money* magazine, among others. Ramapo College is also distinguished as a Career Development College of Distinction by *CollegesofDistinction.com*, boasts the best campus housing in New Jersey on *Niche.com*, and is designated a "Military Friendly College" in Victoria Media's *Guide to Military Friendly Schools*.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, data science, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include business, education, nursing and social work. In addition, the College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels, and offers graduate programs leading to master's degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, Creative Music Technology, Data Science, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education, as well as a post-master's Doctor of Nursing Practice.