



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
October 9, 2017

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Scholars to Hold Conversation about Jews on the Run in the Soviet Union during the Holocaust

MAHWAH, N.J. – Dr. Ellen G. Friedman, Professor of English and Holocaust and Genocide Studies at The College of New Jersey, and Dr. Atina Grossmann, Professor of History in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Cooper Union in New York City, will discuss their recent work on the fate of the Polish Jews who during the Holocaust found refuge in the Soviet Union and beyond. While both Friedman and Grossmann are daughters of survivors, Friedman is a literary scholar and Grossmann is an historian. The event will take place under the auspices of The Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies on Friday, October 27 at 1:45 p.m. in the Alumni Lounges (SC-156) of the Robert A. Scott Student Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey.

Numbers provide the basic outline of the story. Approximately 3.3 million Jews resided in pre-war Poland, of whom approximately 10 percent survived (around 330,000 people), most of whom (between 66 and 80 percent) did so because they escaped to the Soviet Union. While their flight to the Soviet Union often entailed banishment to the prison settlements and Gulags of Siberia and Central Asia, it enabled them to survive.

Ellen Friedman's *The Seven, A Family Holocaust Story* will be published next month by Wayne State University Press. She was born in Kyrgyzstan, a republic of the Soviet Union, within sight of the Tian Shan Mountains bordering China. She began her primary education in Berlin and received her Ph.D. in English from New York University.

Dr. Friedman has given lectures and keynote addresses in the US, Britain, Europe, and Russia and was twice invited to be a visiting professor at the Institute of English and American Studies, J. W. Goethe Universität in Frankfurt, Germany. She has also taught in Paris.

Her books include *Joyce Carol Oates, Breaking the Sequence: Women's Experimental Fiction*, and *Morality USA*.

Atina Grossmann's *Shelter from the Holocaust Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union* will also be published later this year by Wayne State University Press. Born in New York of German-Jewish parents who found refuge during the Holocaust in India and Iran, Grossmann is a graduate of the City College of New York (B.A.) and Rutgers University (M.A., Ph.D.). She has held fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, German Marshall Fund,

American Council of Learned Societies, Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and the American Academy in Berlin, as well as guest professorships at the Humboldt University Berlin and the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena in Germany.

Dr. Grossmann is author of *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany 1945–1949* (2007), which won the George L. Mosse Prize in 2007 from the American Historical Association for the best book on European intellectual and cultural history, as well as many other publications.

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Public Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,000 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers eight graduate programs as well as articulated programs with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.