



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
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Virtual Discussion: Work of German-Jewish Attorney and Political Scientist in Resisting Nazism

MAHWAH, N.J. – Douglas Morris, Esq., Ph.D., a legal historian and a criminal defense attorney for indigent clients in New York City, will discuss his recently published book, *Legal Sabotage: Ernst Fraenkel in Hitler's Germany* (Cambridge University Press, 2020) with Mihaela (Mia) Serban, Associate Professor of Law & Society at Ramapo College. The program will be delivered virtually via Zoom on Thursday, March 4 at 7 p.m. It will be presented under the auspices of the Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and is free and open to the public. Gross Center Director Michael A. Riff will serve as moderator. Registration to attend via Zoom is at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/german-jewish-attorney-and-political-scientist-resisting-nazism-tickets-140695753787>

Attorney and legal theorist Ernst Fraenkel was one of twentieth-century Germany's great intellectuals who worked within Nazi Germany actively resisting the regime, both publicly and secretly. Pursuing a dual track, he represented political defendants in court, while engaging in dangerous resistance work underground. Morris's account is a story of one man's struggle against a repressive regime and sheds light on the limits of resisting Nazi rule. As an intellectual, Fraenkel is best remembered for his classic account of Nazi law and politics, *The Dual State*, first published in 1941 after he went into exile. In 1951, he returned to Germany worked to secure the Federal Republic new democracy, eventually becoming a professor at the Free University Berlin and founder of the John F. Kennedy-Institute for North American Studies.

Douglas G. Morris is a legal historian and practicing criminal defense attorney with Federal Defenders of New York, Inc. In addition to *Legal Sabotage*, he is the author of

Justice Imperiled: The Anti-Nazi Lawyer Max Hirschberg in Weimar Germany (University of Michigan Press, 2005). He also has published a series of scholarly articles on twentieth-century German legal history. At Federal Defenders, Morris represents defendants charged with federal crimes, such as drug smuggling, illegal immigration, currency smuggling, gun use by convicted felons, alien smuggling, fraud and, occasionally, bank robbery. In 2001-02, he was a Fellow at the Dorothy & Lewis B. Cullmann Center for Scholars & Writers at the New York Public Library. In 1998, he was a recipient of the Thurgood Marshall Award from the Association of the Bar of the City of New York for serving “as pro bono counsel to a human being under a sentence of death.”

Mia Serban is an associate professor of Law and Society at Ramapo College. Her teaching and publications are in the areas of law and society, human rights, the rule of law and Romanian Studies. Her book *Subverting Communism in Romania: Law and Private Property: 1945-1965* was published in August 2019. She also co-edited a special issue on Law, History and Justice published by the *Journal of Romanian Studies*.

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 *CondéNast 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.