Dr. Alan Nadel, former Rensselaer Professor of Language, Literature, and Communication, spoke at the Friends of Folsom Library’s spring luncheon on April 15, 2006 in the Russell Sage Dining Hall. Nadel’s topic was “Television in Black-and-White America: Race and National Identity,” which is the title of his recently published book. He maintained that television of the 1950s presented a skewed version of reality and created the myth of an America where all citizens are the same; i.e., white and middle class.

“Television (of the 1950s) was a place where one found definitively normal families” and no blacks were to be seen in that normal world. He pointed out that, although 25 percent of American cowboys were black, the numerous television westerns of the 1950s and 60s rarely depicted a cowboy of color. He noted that this active denial of racial diversity in America back then (and even in the 1960s) deepened racial divisions. After his informative talk, Nadel answered questions from the attendees and autographed copies of his book.

Before leaving this spring to accept the position of William T. Bryan Chair in American Literature and Culture at the University of Kentucky, Nadel had taught at Rensselaer since 1989. He holds a doctorate in English from Rutgers University and is the author of numerous books and essays on American literature and culture, including Invisible Criticism: Ralph Ellison and the American Canon (1988); Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age (1995); and Flatlining on the Field of Dreams: Cultural Narratives in the Films of President Reagan’s America (1997).

Last January, Loretta Ebert left her position of 11 years as Director of Rensselaer Research Libraries to serve as Director of the Research Library at the New York State Library in Albany. Before leaving Rensselaer, Ebert expressed her pleasure to have “worked with the Friends over the past decade. The Friends should feel proud of the evolution of the group and the many contributions that have benefited the libraries and the faculty, students, and staff of the Institute.”

Ebert has served as librarian at a broad range of institutions, including large libraries at Syracuse University and the University of Rochester and the highly specialized libraries at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

(continued on bottom of page 3)

Acting Director of Rensselaer Research Libraries Appointed

With the departure of Loretta Ebert, Bob Mayo was named Acting Director of the Rensselaer Research Libraries. Prior to this, Mayo was Administrative Librarian for the Libraries for four years. A native of the Capital District, Mayo received an Associates Degree in Aircraft Electronics from the Academy of Aeronautics, a Bachelor of Arts in German from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, and earned his Masters in Library Science from the State University of New York at Geneseo. Before coming to Rensselaer, Mayo worked 22 years for the IBM Corporation in Systems Test, Cost Engineering, and Market Development.
Exhibits and Events Committee

The Rensselaer Research Libraries Exhibits and Events Committee was created earlier this year. The committee is responsible for soliciting, selecting, and developing exhibits and events in the Libraries that are of interest to the community and in general promote the educational mission of the Libraries and the Institute, reflecting the intellectual quality of the Libraries’ resources and the Libraries’ role as a center for learning. Specifically, exhibits serve to encourage scholarly and educational use of the Rensselaer Research Libraries, publicize the Libraries’ collections and services, stimulate intellectual curiosity and celebrate scholarship, and display materials on themes and events of interest to the community.

The committee, currently chaired by Assistant Archivist Amy Rupert, is composed of five Library staff members appointed by the Director of Libraries with the advice of the Management Team.

Some of the exhibits and events promoted since the committee’s inception include:

- Collection of photographs taken by members of the Rensselaer Photography Club
- Rensselaer engineering alumni in Latin America 1850 — 1890
- Television of the 1950s
- Women mystery writers
- Brief look at past and present RPI musical organizations

Check Out Reading Room

Selections on RensSearch

Be sure to check out the 200 current best sellers and popular books available in Folsom Library’s Class of ’96 Reading Room. This can be done easily by going to [http://library.rpi.edu/](http://library.rpi.edu/) Once there, under Find, click on Leisure Reading. Friends provide half of the funding for these much-in-demand books the Libraries obtain through a leased books program.

Monthly “Lunch & Learn” Events

The Friends of Folsom Library and the Rensselaer Retirees Forum continue to co-sponsor monthly informal presentations for the Rensselaer community.

Why not plan to join us every month at noon in Folsom Library’s Fischbach Room to hear about an interesting topic in a casual setting. Presentations are usually one hour, followed by questions and answers. Recent speakers and topics included:

10/15/05 Lou Padula—“New Medicare Options”
1/11/05 Amy Faca and Lynne Kopka—“Troy’s Historic Architecture: Recent Developments in Preservation Rehabilitation”
12/09/05 Robert Engel—“Doodles, Drafts, and Designs: Industrial Drawings from the Smithsonian”
1/13/06 William Bower—“Variegated Remarks on a Trip to Norway via London”
2/10//06 Michael Hanna—“Why Biology? Literacy and Pedagogy”
3/29/06 Hollis Seamon—“Moving in Mysterious Ways: Reading/Writing Detective Fiction”
5/12/06 Jorge Vidal—“Renewal of Folsom Library”
9/8/06 Ellen Sinopoli and Dr. Frances Bronet—“Spill Out!”
10/13/06 Connie Fritz—“Impressions of the Holy Land”
11/10/06 Sid Fleisher—“Alley Improvement Project”

Lunch & Learn events are usually the second Friday of the month, unless conflicts arise with Institute functions. Current schedules (and a list of all previous talks) can be found at: [http://www.lib.rpi.edu/friends.html](http://www.lib.rpi.edu/friends.html)

The events are free and everyone is welcome. If you don’t feel like brown bagging it, you can purchase food and beverages at the Library Café.

Contact Adrienne Birchler (bircha@rpi.edu; 276-8329) if you would like to volunteer to speak or have a topic to suggest. We’d love to hear from you.
In Memoriam
Longtime member of the Friends of Folsom Library, the Reverend Thomas Phelan passed away on March 31, 2006. During the more than 40 years he spent at Rensselaer, Phelan held many positions. In addition to his role as RPI Catholic chaplain, he was Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute Dean, Institute Historian, and Professor Emeritus.

New Resident in Folsom Library
Folsom Library has an exciting new addition to its resource offerings! Over the summer, a corner of the first floor was transformed into Rensselaer’s new Center for Communication Practices.

The center, a collaborative production of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication, is a re-envisioning of the former Writing Center. Instead of offering Rensselaer students free assistance with only writing, the center now helps students—and teams of students—with oral presentations and with visual elements of written and oral work; e.g., designing Web pages, incorporating pictures or graphic elements in their work, etc.

One of the primary goals of the Center for Communication Practices is to provide one-on-one assistance to all Rensselaer students that will enable them to use technology to communicate effectively in various genres and in various media—oral and visual as well as written—and to integrate diverse media into a single communicative performance. The center’s staff will work with library staff to help develop students’ information literacy.

The Center for Communication Practices is staffed by a director, two graduate student consultants, and a part-time adjunct consultant.

The director, Barbara Lewis, received her doctorate in Communication and Rhetoric from Rensselaer’s Department of Language, Literature, and Communication in 1999. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature at the College of St. Rose and her Master of Arts, in the same field, at Syracuse University. For the past six years she was Director of Siena College’s Writing Center and taught writing courses as an adjunct professor at RPI, the College of St. Rose, and SUNY IT Tech. Here at Rensselaer, she will also be helping coordinate the Institute’s new Communication Intensive requirement and will be starting a program to train undergraduate students to work as peer consultants in the Center for Communication Practices.

Neiman Prints on Display
Three limited edition signed LeRoy Neiman prints, a gift to the Institute from Rensselaer alumnus Robert Durej, are now on display. These colorful serigraphs have been professionally matted and framed and hang on the west side of the main floor of Folsom Library. The addition of new track lighting has added sparkle to that area of Folsom. The Libraries recently purchased two books, The Prints of LeRoy Neiman and LeRoy Neiman: Five Decades, to accompany the artwork. The books are on display in the Class of ’96 Reading Room, near the prints.

Director of Rensselaer Research Libraries Departs (continued from page 1)
Ebert is a founding board member of ConnectNY and the New York State Higher Education Initiative, the sole advocacy voice for all academic libraries in New York. She served on many campus-wide committees and Institute bodies, including the recent Steering Committee for the Middle States self-evaluation report, and worked with the Division of Human Resources to initiate a program of adoption benefits for Rensselaer employees. Ebert also collaborated with Institute Administration to accomplish the renovation of the main floor of Folsom Library. In her new job, she will continue to strive to improve library resources and services for all of New York State.
Board Members

We say good-bye to, and thank for their years of service, three Friends of Folsom Library board members who have resigned this year: Barbara Landgraf, Debra Nazon, and J. Eric Smith.

The Friends of Folsom Library is fortunate to have three new members take their place.

Dennis Fitzgerald

Dennis Fitzgerald completed over 31 years of transit management at the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) in Albany, NY. He served nearly 23 years as Executive Director, making him one of the longest tenured CEOs in the transit industry.

He has been an active member of the Executive Committee of the Transportation Research Board, Regional Director for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and chair or member of several APTA committees and panels. He served as President of the New York State Public Transit Association for two terms. The readers of Metro Magazine voted him one of the Ten Most Respected General Managers in North American in 2000. He has served on or chaired numerous panels for the Transit Cooperative Research Program. He also served as an expert witness before Congress. He is the recipient of the Frederick G. Field, Jr. Award for support of transportation and community planning. He also served on the NYS Advisory Panel for the NYS 2025 Master Plan for transportation. Currently, Fitzgerald provides consulting services to not-for-profit organizations and serves on the board of several organizations, including the Albany Police Athletic Association.

Fitzgerald is a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he earned Bachelors and Masters degrees in Civil Engineering. He is a registered Professional Engineer in New York State and serves on the boards of several not-for-profit agencies. Fitzgerald served over four years in the U.S. Navy, including service in the Cuban Missile Blockade. He and his wife, Carol, live in Loudonville where they raised three children.

Sharon Roy

Sharon Roy, former director of Academic and Research Computing in Rensselaer’s Division of the Chief Information Officer, retired from the Institute in the fall of 2005. She is now devoting her time to writing, singing, travel, theatre—and catching up on her reading.

She was born in Michigan and grew up in Livonia, a suburb of Detroit. She developed a love of hiking and boating on summer trips to the Upper Peninsula. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Michigan, a Master of Arts in Teaching (English) from Johns Hopkins, and a Doctor of Arts in English from the State University of New York at Albany, Roy was as surprised as anyone to embark on a career in academic computing. She taught English in high school and community college, but, while pursuing her doctoral studies, she decided to try her hand at technical writing, came to Rensselaer, and stayed for 27 years. Some highlights of her career at Rensselaer:

- helped design some of the first classrooms on campus that integrated computers into the curriculum
- co-chaired campus-wide commission to rewrite campus Policy on Electronic Citizenship
- chaired the committee that designed the user interface for the campus-wide Unix system
- led the implementation of the Mobile Computing Program

Her husband, Harry, is a professor of biology at Rensselaer. Their son, James, is a dealer in antique maps in New York City.

Roy appreciates the opportunity to stay connected with friends and former colleagues and to support the activities of the Friends of Folsom Library.

Ruth Gallagher

Ruth (Sabian) Gallagher was an employee of Rensselaer for 15 years, the last eight as Director of Purchasing. Since leaving the Institute, she consults periodically on projects for RPI Purchasing. Her purchasing background began at Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory in Schenectady, operated at the time by General Electric. For the past six winters, she’s worked at the Jiminy Peak Ski School desk. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

Volunteer activities have included Literacy Volunteers and, although no longer involved, Gallagher has an ongoing relationship with a young lady from Croatia whom she assisted with her language skills. She also volunteers at the Colonie Library in the Technical Services Department preparing new books for circulation.

Gallagher's husband, Bob, is the former Director of Information Technology Services at Rensselaer. The couple travel extensively, ski, sail, fish, garden, and bicycle as much as time allows. Gallagher is also an avid reader and enjoys crossword puzzles.
The Friends of Folsom Library is an active group that includes community leaders, faculty, staff, and alumni dedicated to strengthening and enlarging the collections, acquiring rare books and manuscript materials, expanding technological services, and enriching the total cultural environment of the Rensselaer community. During each academic year, the Friends sponsor a variety of activities and informational programs that have direct positive impact on the Libraries' role on campus.

### Latino Book Fund

Every year, Rensselaer's Lambda Upsilon Lambda fraternity donates money to the Libraries' Latino Book Fund, which is used to purchase cultural books. This academic year, the brothers donated money that was matched by both the Rensselaer Research Libraries and the Friends of Folsom Library. The books added to the Libraries' collection include:

- *Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Edwidge Danticat
- *Capoeirs, A Brazilian Art Form: History, Philosophy, and Practice* by Matthias Rohrig
- *The Diary of Andres Fava* by Julio Cortazar
- *Loca Mothion: The Travels of Chicana and Latina Polpular Culture* by Michelle Habell-Pallan
- *Mexican Illegal Aliens: A Mexican American Perspective* by Rafael D. Canul
- *Vodou: Visions and Voices of Haiti* by Phyllis Galembo

### Friends Acknowledge Students

Student employees are a critical part of the Rensselaer Research Libraries' staff. The hours that student assistants worked this past year were equivalent to six full-time employees. They help keep the Libraries open 115 hours per week during semesters, help make library materials easily accessible, help process requests, and provide many other services.

To show appreciation for the fine work they provide, the Friends honored student workers in several ways this past year. One instance was the sponsorship of 15 students' attendance at this year's Clothe-A-Child Student Appreciation Dinner in the Rensselaer Union. This event is led by the Office of the First-Year Experience and Sodexho. More than 60 Rensselaer faculty, administration, and staff members volunteered to work in the kitchen, wait tables, and clean. Sodexho donated the food and cooking skills. Money raised from sponsoring students directly benefits Clothe-A-Child, helping to buy winter clothing for children whose families would otherwise not be able to afford them.

Friends also provided pizza and soft drinks at an afternoon end-of-the-school-year get-together for the Libraries' 45 student assistants.

Lastly, the Friend of Folsom Library provided our five graduating student workers with gift certificates for the Rensselaer Union Bookstore.

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### Friends of Folsom Library - 2007 Membership Year

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**BECOME A FRIEND OF THE LIBRARY**

The Friends of Folsom Library is an active group that includes community leaders, faculty, staff, and alumni dedicated to strengthening and enlarging the collections, acquiring rare books and manuscript materials, expanding technological services, and enriching the total cultural environment of the Rensselaer community. During each academic year, the Friends sponsor a variety of activities and informational programs that have direct positive impact on the Libraries' role on campus.
Newest Librarian

Glen Wiley is the most recent addition to Rensselaer Research Libraries’ professional staff. As the Digital Resources and Metadata Librarian, he manages all aspects of the Libraries’ electronic resources and oversees cataloging and metadata activities. Metadata is data which describes attributes of a resource, usually a digital object. Cataloging in a library environment is an example of metadata.

Prior to coming to Rensselaer, Wiley was at North Carolina State University Library where he served as Serials and Electronic Resources Cataloging Librarian. He also previously worked as a Visual Resources Cataloger at Syracuse University, where he received his Masters in Library Science degree in 2004 and his undergraduate degree in History of Art in 2002.

Feature Film Update

Thanks largely to the contributions of the Friends, the Libraries’ media collection now has over 1,400 DVDs and VHS videos. As a testament to their popularity, a recent accounting showed that more media was borrowed from the Library than books.

McKinney Contest

The Friends of Folsom Library has again contributed $250 for the annual McKinney Contest. Rensselaer’s Language, Literature, and Communication (LL&C) department coordinates the contest. Each year this literary/art competition offers monetary prizes at both the undergraduate and graduate level for the following categories: poetry, essay, fiction, drama, and electronic media.

Since 1941, the McKinney Contest has been administered and judged by the faculty of LL&C. Samuel P. McKinney, an 1884 graduate of Rensselaer, endowed the contest as a memorial to his wife, Mary A. Earl McKinney.

This year’s scheduled guest writer, E. L. Doctorow, author of such novels as *Billy Barthgate* (1989), *Loon Lake* (1980), and *Ragtime* (1975), presented awards to the winners of the contest and performed a reading. The April event was well attended.

New Furniture

Through the generosity of the Friends of Folsom Library, the second floor of the Folsom Library will have new chairs, tables, and stools for the computer information hubs.

Plants Thrive in Folsom Library

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends, patrons and staff alike enjoy several potted plants in Folsom Library. Plant maintenance is sponsored by Friends of Folsom Library.

Outstanding Design Award

The Folsom Library was recognized recently for “Outstanding Design—Libraries/Media Centers” by the 2006 Education Interiors design competition sponsored by American School and University magazine. In addition to the Folsom Library’s main floor renewal project’s profile in the August issue of Educational Interiors Showcase, AS&U sent a commemorative plaque.

Kudos to Jorge Vidal, Designer and Project Manager, Campus Planning and Facilities Design, for planning and implementing a more inviting, functional, and user-friendly environment.
Perhaps you’ve seen this summer’s film documentary *Wordplay* co-starring crossword titleholder and 2006 Rensselaer engineering graduate Tyler Hinman. Now’s your chance to see Hinman in action as he tackles a *New York Times* crossword puzzle in two minutes or less right before your eyes! He’ll also challenge the audience to solve a puzzle he created especially for this January 19th event.

Hinman has been solving crossword puzzles since he was a ninth grader. He also enjoys the challenge of creating them. At 15, he was the youngest person ever to publish a crossword puzzle in the *New York Times*. Hinman can also take claim to being the youngest person to win the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament, which he won twice.

The [Tyler Hinman Challenge](#) is a FREE event sponsored by the Friends of Folsom Library, but you will need a ticket for admission. If you clip the one below, please let us know you plan to attend either by e-mailing bircha@rpi.edu or calling 276-8329. Extra tickets can be picked up at the Circulation Desk in the Folsom Library or Father’s Food in the Rensselaer Union.

Hope to see you there!
WORLD MASTER CROSSWORD CHAMP IS BACK!

Come see crossword master Tyler Hinman tackle a New York Times crossword puzzle and challenge the audience to solve a puzzle he created just for this event!

Free!

Friday, January 19th

See page 7 for details.

Sponsored by Friends of Folsom Library.