Library to Honor Professor Emeritus Gerald M. Friedman

On Tuesday, November 25, at 3:00 p.m., the Library will honor Dr. Gerald M. Friedman, Professor Emeritus of Sedimentology and Geohistory, at a ceremony and exhibit outside the Institute Archives and Special Collection’s Fixman Room on Folsom Library’s third floor. Speakers will include Dr. Frank Spear, Department Head and Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Dr. Judith Friedman Rosen, Professor Friedman’s daughter.

Since his arrival at Rensselaer in 1964, Dr. Friedman has been an intensive user of the Folsom Library and has donated many items to its collections. His most recent and important gift totals nearly 250 rare history of geology volumes collected by Professor Friedman during his career. The Friedman volumes, which will be named the Gerald M. Friedman History of Geology Collection, build on the department’s strength in natural history and the history of geology. The collection constitutes a major research resource for Rensselaer students and faculty and history of science scholars throughout the world.

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Schwarzschild to Speak at Next Local Authors Talk

The Friends are hosting their second in a series of Talks with Local Authors on Thursday, November 6th, at 12:00 noon. Our speaker will be Edward Schwarzschild, whose most recent book, The Family Diamond, is a collection of stories about family, love, and loss set in and around Philadelphia. His first book, Responsible Men, is a San Francisco Chronicle Best Book of the Year, a Book Sense Notable Pick, and a finalist for the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Samuel Goldberg and Sons Foundation Prize for Jewish Fiction.

Schwarzschild is a fourth generation Philadelphian. He graduated magna cum laude from Cornell University, received a Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Boston University, and earned a Ph.D. in English (American literature) from Washington University in St. Louis. He was a Helen (continued on page 3)
The collection contains many icons of the history of geology, including William Smith’s famous map, *A delineation of the strata of England and Wales, with part of Scotland*, and James Hutton’s *Abstract of a dissertation read in the Royal Society of Edinburgh, upon the seventh of March, and fourth of April, M.DCC,LXXXV, concerning the system of the earth, its duration and stability*.

William Smith (1769-1839) is best known for his development of the science of stratigraphy. While working as a canal-site surveyor, Smith undertook a systematic study of the geological strata and the fossils appearing in each layer. His map, published in 1815, was the first modern geologic map and is the subject of Simon Winchester’s 2001 best seller, *The Map That Changed the World*.

Scottish geologist, chemist, and naturalist James Hutton (1726-1797) developed one of the fundamental principles of geology—uniformitarianism, which explains the features of the earth’s crust in terms of natural processes occurring over geologic time. Hutton theorized that geologic processes, such as the formation of sediment, erosion, and volcanism, could fully explain current landforms all over the world. These ideas contradicted the commonly held belief, derived from the Bible’s Book of Genesis, that the Earth was about 6,000 years old. The Abstract is the first printed articulation of Hutton’s new theories and a cornerstone of scientific modernity. Hutton’s ideas influenced Charles Lyell’s *Principles of Geology*, which in turn influenced Charles Darwin’s theories of adaptive evolution.

Both the Smith and Hutton volumes, along with many other items from the collection, will be on display beginning November 25.

Dr. Friedman earned his M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University. He earned a Doctorate of Science from the University of London and received an honorary Doctorate of Natural Science from the University of Heidelberg in Germany. He initially worked as a geochemist and petrologist in the Appalachians and Canadian Shield. He then went on to become a research geologist and director of sedimentology research at the Amoco Research Laboratory in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He taught at Rensselaer from 1964 to 1984 when he was appointed Professor Emeritus of Sedimentology and Geohistory. He joined the faculty at the City University of New York in Brooklyn in 1984. There he worked with graduate students and post-doctoral researchers on such topics as carbonate deposits, regional stratigraphy, and the environmental geology of rivers. He retired from CUNY in 2004, but continues his research on the sedimentology and stratigraphy of Paleozoic deposits and prospective gas storage reservoirs in New York State and evaporite and carbonate deposition worldwide.

Professor Friedman is the founder and director of the Northeastern Science Foundation in Troy, New York, which hosts symposia and publishes several journals, including *Northeastern Geology, Environmental Science*, and *Carbonates and Evaporites*. He has served as an officer for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Geological Society of America, the National Association of Geoscience Teachers, and the New York State Geological Association. He has also served as editor of several publications and as a member of more than 20 advisory committees. As the author or co-author of over 500 publications, his ability to communicate difficult topics is illustrated by his classic textbook, *Principles of Sedimentology*, co-authored with J.E. Sanders.

He has won a number of prestigious awards for his work, including the American Geological Institute's 2005 Legendary Geoscientist Award, the Geological Society of America's Mary C. Rabbit Memorial Medal, the Sidney Powers Memorial Medal, the John T. Galey, Jr. Memorial Award, The Association of Earth Science Editors Award for Outstanding Editing, and the Distinguished Educator Award. He is also the recipient of the SEPM Twenhofel Medal and the Hollis D. Hedberg Award in Energy from the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man at Southern Methodist University.
Deutsch Creative Writing Fellow at Boston University and a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University. He is an associate professor at the University at Albany, SUNY, and a fellow at the New York State Writers Institute.

Following is a short essay Schawrschild wrote about writing Responsible Men when it was published. It appeared in the weekly newspaper, The Forward, on June 17, 2005.

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Life of a Salesman: A Son’s Tribute

When I was a kid, my father told me he couldn’t read or watch ’Death of a Salesman.” It hit far too close to home. Of course, this inspired me to read the play over and over again. Arthur Miller’s masterpiece affected me in ways I’m still figuring out, but I’m certain of two things: Miller gave me the dream of becoming a writer, and he showed me how to begin to understand my father.

My father is a salesman, my grandfather was a salesman and my great-grandfather was a salesman. So growing up on the edge of Northeast Philadelphia, I felt bound to become a salesman myself.

My father works as a manufacturer’s representative, a middleman, selling textiles for various mills. He sells to companies that make clothes. He works on commission — usually 1 or 2 % — with no guaranteed salary and no benefits. My grandfather started the business in 1926. My father followed in his footsteps, and they shared a small office for close to 60 years. For the last 22 years, my father has had the office to himself. These days, he doesn’t travel as much as he used to, but he’s still often on the road, visiting old clients.

When I was around 10 years old, my father took me on the road with him occasionally.
Board News

On October 7, the Board of the Friends of the Folsom Library unanimously voted the appointment of Professor Gerald M. Friedman as a Lifetime Member of the Friends. This distinction is given to people who have shown outstanding commitment to the Library and the mission, goals, and objectives of the Friends of the Folsom Library.

The Board was pleased to welcome four Board members who were voted in at the spring meeting and introduced to the Friends in the spring issue of Folsom Library Unabridged. These members are Peter Collopy ’71, Ray Lutzky ’02, Jean Purcell, and Marion Roach Smith.

Three ex officio members were also welcomed to the Board. These student Directors are Grand Marshal Kara Chesal (class of 2009); graduate student and member of the Student Senate Dan Horvath; and undergraduate student Senator Ben Hunt (class of 2010). We are very fortunate to have these students agree to serve on the Board and look forward to their input.

The Board also accepted the resignation of Chair Elect Shirley Molloy, who regrets having to step down due to health reasons. Molloy has been a valued member of the Board since 2003. Before her retirement from Rensselaer nine years ago, Molloy worked in several positions, including Assistant to the President and Secretary of the Institute. We wish her well in her recovery.

EMPAC Gala Dinner Held in Folsom Library

On Friday, October 3, the Folsom Library was magically transformed into a festive banquet hall for the Gala Dinner heralding the grand opening of the impressive new Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) at Rensselaer. Over 500 guests attended the dinner, which was just one of the events taking place during Gala Weekend. The Folsom Library welcomes its newest neighbor!
The Rensselaer Libraries at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute launched the Rensselaer Digital Collections this fall, in collaboration with other units at Rensselaer. Our main aim for the Rensselaer Digital Collections is to improve access to materials of intellectual, historic, and cultural value to Rensselaer, encompassing image, audio, video, and text formats. Initial collections include student work (dissertations and theses, final projects and studio work), technical reports authored by Rensselaer faculty, architectural images, and selected Rensselaer publications. Link to the Rensselaer Digital Collections from the Rensselaer Libraries homepage at http://library.rpi.edu.

Theses and dissertations form our largest collection. Though the library still collects a hard copy of each thesis, The Office of Graduate Education at Rensselaer has required deposit of an electronic copy of graduating students’ Ph.D. theses since December 2006 and Master’s theses since December 2007. Students depositing their theses can choose to apply a traditional copyright, with access restricted to on-campus users only, or a Creative Commons license, which makes their work viewable to anyone on the Web. Regardless of the license chosen, a title page and abstract for each thesis is available for anyone to view.

Architecture students at Rensselaer submit a culminating project as part of their degree requirements, and also complete projects in their studio classes. Most students choose to make their 5th year available through Rensselaer Digital Collections. Architecture faculty members also select exemplary projects from their studio classes to add to the Collections. Making these projects available on the web not only helps architecture students gain exposure for their work, but also aids the School of Architecture in preparing background materials for ongoing accreditation.

The Rensselaer Digital Collections also hold a digitized photo-archival collection of Armenian architecture, gathered by Rensselaer’s late Professor V. Lawrence Parsegian. Because Rensselaer holds the copyright to these images, we have been able to make them accessible on the open web for research and educational use.

Many of our initial collections are growing on an ongoing basis, and we are also working on expanding our offerings. In the near future, we will be adding materials related to Experimental Media and Performing Arts performances, as well as expanding the collection of technical reports. Several recent years of the Polytechnic (Rensselaer’s student newspaper) are also ready to be added to the Collections, once issues related to copyright and syndicated content are resolved. (Future additions will include older, out-of-copyright Polytechnic issues.) We also are planning a review and revision of our existing metadata, developing policies for the creation of new collections, and investigating providing access to sound and video files through a streaming server.
Schwarschild
(continued from page 3)

me on tours, leading me through rooms with endless rows of men and women at sewing machines, the sound of their hard work almost deafening.

In factory after factory, people joked with me, telling me that I looked like a smart little businessman. Then one day, outside a conference room in Baltimore, a buyer put his hand on my shoulder. He had jeweled rings on a few of his fingers. "Someday you'll be taking over for your father," he said. "Do you think you'll be as good a salesman as he is?"

"I think I will," I said. "I'll try."

"I'm glad to hear it," the buyer said. "But you need to remember that it takes a lot of work to close a deal."

My father didn't say anything, but I could tell from the way he shut his briefcase that he was angry. He still was angry when he tossed the briefcase into the car and slammed the trunk. Inside the car, he started to calm down. "I want you to understand something," he said, looking over at me. "You are not going to be a salesman."

"Why not?"

"Because it's a miserable job," he said. "That's why not. Because I wish I wasn't a salesman and I don't want you wishing the same thing someday. You can be whatever you want when you grow up, just not a salesman. Okay?"

"Okay," I said.

He slipped the keys into the ignition and started the car. "I'm glad we got that out of the way," he said. "Wish my father had done the same for me."

Then he shifted into reverse, stretched his right arm across the bench seat and turned his head like he always did so that he could back up. I could see that he was smiling now. "Don't get me wrong," he said. "You could easily be as good a salesman as I am, but you're going to do something better."

That was the last business trip I took with my father. He gave me the college education he longed to have, pushed me to become a doctor when that was what I dreamed of, and then pushed me to become a writer when Arthur Miller helped me discover that was what I wanted to be.

Still, those road trips have stayed with me, shaping not only what I write but also how I write. For instance, I like to be in my study early in the mornings. When the work is going well, I'm in my chair in time to watch the sunrise. I see it brighten the room, and I can feel the day opening up in front of me like a clear highway, full of promise.

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Library Open House a Huge Success

On August 22, over 300 freshmen, transfer, and new graduate students attended the Library’s open house. They toured the four floors, met the staff, and learned about our services. They also had the opportunity to participate in various literature- and library-related games, make ice cream sundaes, view some of the memorabilia in the Archives’ collections, get an introduction to the Rensselaer Digital Collections, and win some terrific prizes in a raffle.

Thanks to Biological Sciences/Cognitive Science Librarian Connie Fritz, over 70 prizes were donated by several vendors the library does business with. These include IEEE, who contributed flash drives, USB hubs, calculators, and book bags; Springer, who sent flash drives and polo shirts; and SciFinder Scholar, who gave stadium blankets, messenger bags, and leather-bound notebooks. Fritz also solicited gifts from the Rensselaer Campus Computer Store, who generously donated an iPod shuffle, and the Rensselaer Union Bookstore, who kindly contributed a stadium blanket with the Rensselaer logo and the bags used to stuff all the goodies that were handed out to each open house visitor.
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 a direct positive impact on the Folsom Library’s role on campus.

Did you know that . . .

the book that has the earliest date of publication in the Library’s collection is written by Benedetto Bordon (1450-1530) and was published in Venice in MDXXXIII (1534)?

This ancient tome’s title is . . .

*Isolario di Benedetto Bordone nel qual si ragiona di tutte l'isole del mondo, con li lor nomi antichi & moderni, historie, fauole, & modi del loro viuere, & in qual parte del mare stanno, & in qual parallelo & clima giaciono. Con la gionta del Monte del Oro nouamente ritrouato. Con il breve del papa et gratia & priuilegio della illustissima Signoria di Venetia come in quelli appare.*

The Folsom Library will once again be a drop off location for the U.S. Marine’s Toys for Tots program. Last year, over 300 toys were collected in the Library over a three-week period. Library Specialist Michele Matthews will again coordinate the program for the Library. Donations can be dropped off anytime after Thanksgiving up until December 10th.
Ceremony to Honor Newly Nominated Friends Life Member

Gerald M. Friedman

Tuesday, November 25th
3:00 p.m.

Institute Archives and Special Collection’s Fixman Room (Third Floor)

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TALK WITH LOCAL AUTHOR EDWARD SCHWARZSCHILD

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH

12:00 NOON TO 1:00 P.M.

FISCHBACH ROOM

BRING YOUR LUNCH OR PURCHASE ONE IN THE LIBRARY CAFÉ. DESSERT WILL BE PROVIDED.