



# I am The ROCK

## Mark O'Connor

**Job:** Associate professor, English.

**Joined SRU:** 2003

**Background:** I grew up in Florida and attended college in Washington, D.C. Graduate school took me to Houston, where I not only learned what expressions like 'all hat and no cattle' meant, but also met and worked with amazing writers.

**Interests:** The intersection of text and image has long been a source of fascination, especially after seeing the 'Book of Kells' as a teenager. I have been able to combine this interest with my teaching by developing a course in the graphic novel. Traveling is a deep interest as well, the joy in learning about other cultures. The few times I have traveled with our students have provided sublime moments, for example seeing a student viewing Michelangelo's David for the first time and knowing they are changed forever.

**Person(s) I would like to have dinner with:** George Herriman, the artist who created Krazy Kat. I would love to hear how he negotiated all the contradictions in his life to create that gorgeous newspaper comic.

**Why I work at The Rock:** This one is easy, the students and my colleagues. I am lucky enough to co-advise 'SLAB' – SRU's literary magazine – with Dr. Danette DiMarco and semester after semester the students surprise us with their boundless energy and great ideas. Outside of my work on 'SLAB,' I am always impressed by the enthusiasm of our students, matched by the enthusiasm of my colleagues. They make it fun.

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