

# I am The ROCK

## Thomas Gordon

**Job:** professor, elementary education/early childhood development.

**Joined SRU:** January 1992.

**Background:** I was born in Pittsburgh and lived there until I left for graduate school in North Carolina. After 15 years, I was lucky enough to move back to teach at Slippery Rock and now live near old friends and family. I have three children, two of whom are teachers, and four grandchildren who are spread around the country. After many years, my partner, Miriam DeRiso, and I are getting married this summer.

**Interests:** Wide and varied. I rarely miss a Saturday of yard sales or flea markets. Miriam and I have both dedicated ourselves to work for peace and social justice, which could easily be a few fulltime jobs. We travel as much as possible – next big trip will be late spring to Ecuador, into the Amazon. I love and feel at home in Latin America, although a relatively recent trip to Morocco opened new vistas. I like to be outside moving either hiking, biking or canoeing.

**Last book read:** 'Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling' by Ross King.

**Why I work at The Rock:** I wanted to be at a university that stressed teaching and put primary emphasis on the well being and learning experiences of students. And, I found it at the Rock. Cooperating teachers in the public schools continually tell us that the Slippery Rock University student teachers are the best prepared they see, so I know we must be doing something right. Also, SRU allows me to pursue those professional interests that enhance the education and development of our students. Every spring since 1993, I have been able to take student teachers to The American School in Mexico City.

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