

read. During his and Fintel's spring 2001 lecture series based on their book, *Dear God, It's Cancer*, he made reference to *The Bible*, Rabbi Harold Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, author C.S. Lewis and Victor Frankl's *Man's Search For Meaning*. "I must keep reading until I've got it," he said. He recalled an advisor in graduate school telling him that he must read everything of quality that's out there—all the different points of view on his subject. "And only then are you justified to sit down and write yourself. During the last sabbatical, I did nothing but read, eight hours a day for six months. If I had been single, I might have read for 14 hours a day. And I took notes. After six months, I knew that I had read enough and that it was time to write," he said.

He has always written. Back in a life before Roanoke College, before he was ordained an Episcopal priest, before his six books and more than two dozen articles, he wrote frequent letters to the editor of his local paper in Fargo, North Dakota. "They were on the order of op-ed pieces," he said. Since then, he has written mostly about religious scholarship. "Religion is as deep and broad as the ocean. You have to do a lot of studying, not only of nonwestern and western religions. There are three millennium of tradition that you have to get some control of. I had five years of grad school studying full time and have been researching and writing and publishing ever since."

The publishing aspect of writing is another beast McDermott has tackled. He said when a person first begins they are begging to be published, and that it takes establishing a track record to turn the tables. "I have had some requests now, and I think that when I get this next book written, because of my track record, it should not be too difficult to find a publisher." He said the marketing varies greatly from academic to trade books. For academic books, not much marketing is done—publishers send books to journals to be reviewed and then place a few ads in a few prominent journals. With trade books, such as *Dear God, It's Cancer*, the publisher put ads all over the place and contacted radio and television shows.

But even McDermott, hungry for words as he is, cannot write all the time. He gets up and walks around. He thinks. He reads. But he knows that in the end, it's his nature to write. He just can't avoid those words. "It's a compulsion. It's because I love it, and I think I have something to say to someone." ®

Professors in

BY GARY WINKLER

The Roanoke College faculty includes many accomplished writers. Here is a sampling of their most recent work:

Dr. Melanie Almeder

Assistant Professor of English. Almeder recently joined her RC colleagues in responding to the events of September 11. The poet read a number of her works in a presentation titled *The Spirit Sings: A Musical Response to September 11*. In the spring of 2001, she also presented a scholarly paper titled *Teaching "I" in Literary Witness* at a conference in Denver. Almeder is currently working on a book-length manuscript of the same title and recently completed a summer writer's residency at the prestigious Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Ireland.

Dr. Robert Benne



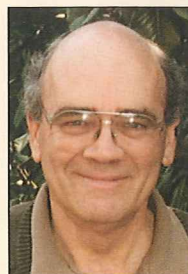
Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion Emeritus and Director of the Roanoke College Center for Religion and Society. In addition to penning many pieces for a variety of publications, Benne's new book *Quality with Soul*, published by Eerdmans in the spring of 2001, examines the secularization of parochial education in America and identifies key administrative policies that have, in many cases, jeopardized particular school's religious identities. Benne recently spent time traveling throughout Germany tracing the roots of the Reformation.

Dr. Keith Cartwright

Assistant Professor of English. In February of 2002, Cartwright received a \$5,000 Individual Artist Fellowship grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA), which will help him finish a book of poetry that combines Virginia history and landscape

with the rich tapestry of Afro-Creole mythologies that once pervaded this culture. Published extensively, Cartwright's book *Reading Africa into American Literature: Epics, Fables and Gothic Tales* is available through the University Press of Kentucky.

Dr. Robert Denham

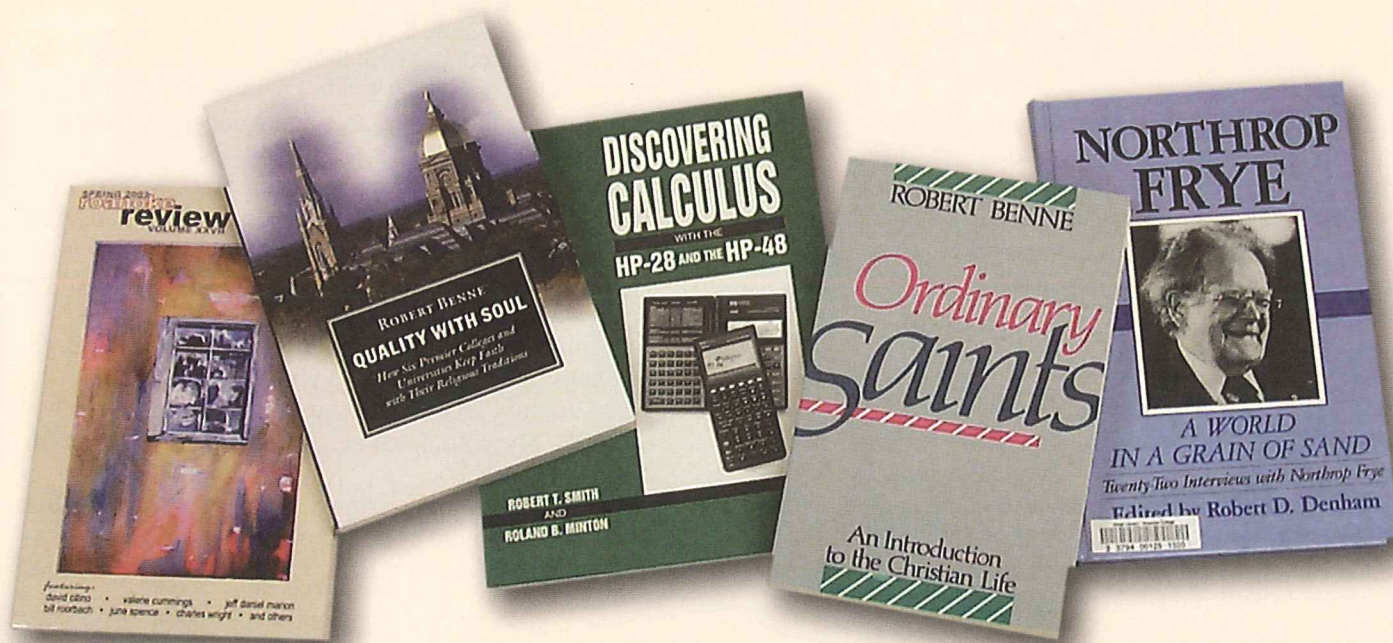


Professor of English. After receiving a \$40,000 fellowship grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Denham is on sabbatical in 2002-2003. Continuing his more than 25-year study of literary and social critic Northrop Frye, Denham's first stop is Victoria University in Toronto, Ontario, which houses the most extensive Frye library. His research will result in a book-length study of the man and his mindset. In addition to his current work in progress, Denham has published and edited numerous publications on Frye and his writings.

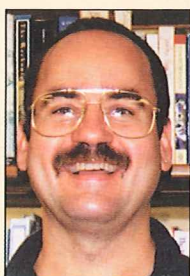
Erin Garvin

Part-time Lecturer in Physical Education. Garvin is the author of *Conquering the Divide: A Woman's Journey to Self Discovery*. This self-published book is Garvin's effort to "complete the lessons" of her bike ride along the 2,500-mile Continental Divide Trail. Garvin was a speaker at the weekly convocation series in the spring. She said her bike gave her a feeling of self-reliance and freedom. The trip, however, offered many physical obstacles, such as weather from El Nino, hail, ice and freezing rain. Garvin said she felt closer to God in the woods. She came away with three lessons from the adventure: 1. Follow your heart. 2. Enjoy abundance and simplicity. 3. Go to the woods for a spiritual embrace.

Print



Dr. Gary G. Gibbs



Associate Professor of History. Gibbs has been book review editor of *The Sixteenth Century Journal* for the last three years. Gibbs is assisted in that endeavor by Dr. Whitney Leeson

and Dr. James Ogier. The scholarly journal publishes more than 400 book reviews annually, along with essays drawn from many disciplines. Gibbs also is writing an essay of a London merchant-tailor who kept a journal from 1550 to 1563. Gibbs argues that he presents to the modern world a view of English government from the perspective of a citizen of London.

Dr. Paul Hanstedt



Associate Professor of English. In April of 2001 Hanstedt showed his creative side when his one-act play *Widowmakers*, a story about three women on a park bench who conspire to kill their

husbands, was presented on campus. Over the years Hanstedt's scholarly work has been featured in such publications as *Shenandoah* and the *Wisconsin Review*. Hanstedt, who also edits the *Roanoke Review*, is currently on sabbatical and working on a novel that portrays the lighter side of a Yankee sheriff in a southern town.

Dr. Gary Hollis



Associate Professor of Chemistry. Hollis was recognized with the Dean's Council Award for his professional development record. His work, which has appeared in numerous scholarly

publications, includes such creative titles as *Jurassic Park as a Teaching Tool in the Chemistry Classroom* and *The Creative Use of Strychnine Chemistry*, which uses an Agatha Christie murder mystery as a working framework.

Dr. Robert Jenkins '61

Professor of Biology. Since 1994 when he generated his definitive 1100-page *Freshwater Fishes of Virginia*—the largest book of its kind on the subject—

Jenkins has continued to pursue his passion for taxonomy and the identification of new species. His most recent work, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has resulted in the identification of three new species of fish as well as more information on the "Redhouse Sucker," a species of fish found from the Carolinas to the mountains of north Georgia. While publication of his findings proceeds, Jenkins clears his mind by working on his novel.

Dr. Roland B. Minton



Professor of Mathematics. Minton has taken his talent for numbers nationwide and has published book reviews and scholarly papers in both newspapers and journals. His newest book, *Calculus*, which he co-authored with Robert Smith of Millersville State University in Pennsylvania, was published by McGraw-Hill in 2001. In fact, the publisher is planning a series of Minton-Smith books to compete with the bestsellers in the field of mathematics.