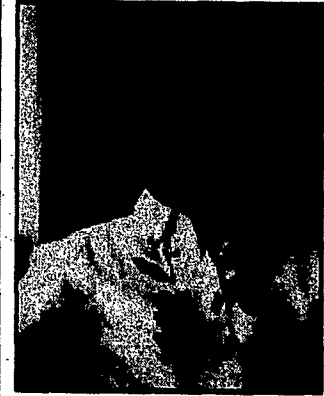


## ST. LAWRENCE NEWS REEL

Jarrold Caprow  
Managing Editor

### "Birds of All Kinds Suddenly Began to Attack People, in Increasing Numbers and With Increasing Viciousness"

This may sound like the plot summary of Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 thriller *The Birds*, but alas it happened right here on campus. Last week, the University Committee for Students Feeling Good About Themselves (UCSFGAT) erected several statues to honor past presidents of the University. The statues were placed on the Richardson triangle and they were unveiled at a dedication ceremony Friday. University officers such as the President and Deans of Academics and Student Life were present, along with several hundred guests, such as students, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees. Four University Presidents' statues were presented in the ceremony. Each of the statues were draped and then uncovered prior to the President reading an ode to each. The first three statues to be unveiled were Foster Sargent Brown (1963-1969), Frank Peter Piskor (1969-1981), and W. Lawrence Gulick (1981-1987). The ceremony had already lasted about forty-five minutes when the final statue was unveiled, the statue of the sixteenth President of the University, Patti McGill Peterson. It was at this point that "it" happened. Onlookers were stunned as birds of every ilk descended on the Richardson triangle. *The Hill News* was present at the ceremony and interviewed many victims. One student said, "Birds of all kinds suddenly began to attack people, in increasing numbers and with increasing viciousness." A first-year student remarked, "As soon as the sheet was dropped from the statue, literally hundreds of birds landed on the statue, covering it from head to toe. Those birds that did not land on the statue terrorized the audience members." He also remarked, "Even though the Peterson statue was innondated with birds, the other statues remained fowl free. Someone thought it may have been because she was President during the era of darkness." The local SPCA, St. Lawrence County Sheriff's Department and the Safety & Security Department's Night Owls all responded to the incident. Officials on sight were able to determine that between 750-1,000 birds flocked to the location. Several people were transported to Canton Potsdam Hospital as a result of their injuries from the attack. One woman suffered severe peck wounds to the leg, and another man had head lacerations after a crow landed on and scratched his bald head. As many as ten toupees and wigs were lost to the birds, in addition to countless baseball caps, bandanas and at least one beret. A professor stated that, "President Peterson was to St. Lawrence what Kim Campbell was to Canada." (Campbell served as Canadian Prime Minister for a short stint in 1993.)



A volunteer member of the SPCA was actually on site when the incident took place. He told *The Hill News*, "The birds that inundated the Peterson statue were from many different species. The first flocks contained mostly crows and blackbirds, but as the ten minute attack continued, more birds, like pigeons, canaries, waterhens, Canada geese, ducks, flamingos, and to my amazement several ostrich descended on the area. These birds were coming out of the wood work." A confused international student shouted feverishly, "I saw waterhens! Near here, I don't even know where nests the waterhen!" Most were shocked by the appearance of the large ostrich and the flamingos. The chaos came to an end when Security called members of the facilities team and they came with their shotguns, shovels, hoses and even an 18<sup>th</sup> Century cannon to scare off the birds. The birds finally gave up when the head of facilities day time crew, Merle Goats managed to topple the statue, knocking its head off. Goats said, "Now that we've toppled that dictator a second time, maybe campus will be able to see the light of day." Goats was on staff back in 1996 when Peterson left office. The University is forced to clean up once again. The Richardson triangle is covered with a myriad of bird feces, like splatters of white out all over. Laundry machines and dry cleaners all over Canton will be busy for days, cleaning up after a day that will live in infamy.

The scene in the parking lot afterward. The birds finally gave up when the head of facilities day time crew, Merle Goats managed to topple the statue, knocking its head off. Goats said, "Now that we've toppled that dictator a second time, maybe campus will be able to see the light of day." Goats was on staff back in 1996 when Peterson left office.

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## Photo of the Week

Senior Andrew Reymur tosses a baseball on the lawn near Sykes, Tuesday. He and his friends were playing catch and enjoying the delayed arrival of spring. Also note the return of the Adirondack chairs in the background!

Photo by Dustin Williamson



## THE WEEK OF APRIL 12, 2002

**SAINT:** Alpha Phi Omega and Chi Omega for helping sponsor the blood drive in Sykes Formal Lounge.

**SAINT:** Prospective scholars visiting the campus - we hope to see more of you next year! Also, thanks to Admissions and Security for their hard work.

**SAINT:** The library, because being able to renew books over the phone or via email is "cool."

**PURGATORY:** People who...

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**PURGATORY:** Obnoxious people who...

**SINNER:** People who drive through the crosswalk in front of Brewer Bookstore when there are pedestrians in the crosswalk. Is that a sin?

**SINNER:** People who think parking in the bookstore lot to go to classes is ok. It's not!

**SINNER:** People who speed on Romoda Drive between Main Street and Hillside Road. Remember the speed limit is 15 miles per hour, and anything over it can get you a ticket!

**QUESTION OF THE WEEK:** Now that the weather is nice, are you still able to concentrate on school?

**SUGGESTION OF THE WEEK:** Write an actual letter. Does anyone do that anymore?

**QUOTATION OF THE WEEK:** "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

-Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

## ST. LAWRENCE IN BRIEF



The National Theatre of the Deaf will perform *Profile of a Deaf Peddler* at St. Lawrence University tonight, Friday, April 19, at 8 p.m. in Gulick Theatre. The event is open to the public, free of charge. Tickets are available in the Brewer Bookstore and at the main desk of the E.J. Noble University Center.



St. Lawrence University Associate Professor of History Judith A. DeGroat will give the Frank P. Piskor Faculty Lecture on Monday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m. in Herring-Cole on campus, on the topic "Headscarves and Khaki: Gendered Perceptions of Franco-Maghrebians in Contemporary France."



"Tides Of Green," an exhibition of photographs taken in the Florida Everglades by St. Lawrence University senior Matthew P. Bogosian, will be at the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery on campus from April 17 through June 3; an opening reception will be held on Wednesday, April 17, at 7 p.m. in the gallery.

Compiled from University Communications Releases

### The Mzungu View Rambles about Religion

Religion can be a touchy topic, and I know I could very well be getting myself into trouble by even going there. So I've been avoiding the topic for two months, but I just somehow can't get away with being in Kenya this long and not sharing a little about everyone's experiences with religion. Religion is very prominent in Kenyan culture, and the presence of missionaries is strong. We all found out about religion quickly from our first week in Meru, and our experiences with it have continued.

It goes a little something like this: Colonial missionaries thought that the traditional African religions were too primitive and decided that everyone needed to become Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, you name it, as long as there was no more ancestor worship. The shift to Christianity made a lasting mark. Now you'll drive through Kenya seeing signs such as "Jesus saves" and "The Lord is my light." Many of us had "What religion are you?" and "Are you saved?" among our first questions from our homestay families.

In most ways, they have adapted Christianity and made it into something their own, and their worships and services are much more animated and enthusiastic than any that us Mzungu have ever experienced. Dancing, song, and clapping are an essential part to any service-why not have fun and celebrate god?

And while in many ways it has been assimilated into their lives smoothly, there are some disturbing aspects, as

## LARRY ON THE ROAD - IMPRESSIONS OF KENYA

Sophia Hasenfus  
Columnist

well. All of us have managed to catch The 700 Club here and there at our homestays, in restaurants, in public waiting rooms. The 700 Club is an American broadcast of Christian conservative thoughts on life and morals. This is the same show that announced that Harry Potter should be banned because it is teaching children witchcraft. If you ever get a chance to catch it, you'll see what I mean.

And of course there are those who have managed to go on with their traditional beliefs, rejecting the influx of Western Christianity in favor of their customs. In Samburu, religion is also a central part of their lifestyles, but in a different way. The Samburu people don't go to church, don't pray from the bible, or send their children to Catholic school. For them, religion is an integral part of their lives, not something that is celebrated only on Sundays. In the Samburu language, the word for god is the same word as rain. They live in a semi-arid climate with droughts on a regular basis. They are nomadic pastoralists, sustaining their lives off of their cow, goat, sheep, and camel herds. Their nomadism is essential given the patterns (or lack of patterns) of rainfall and dependency on the water supply.

They pray before elder meetings, thanking god for the blessings of friends and family, water, food, animals and life. They know that the existence of rain isn't man-made, so it naturally comes from some other higher power. Rain is essential to their lives, and therefore god and rain go hand in hand.

So what was so wrong with this form of religion that the colonial missionaries decided that it just had to go? I sort of like the idea that god is everywhere. And when we discussed religion with some of our Samburu elders (wazee), they told us that god was neither male or female, white or black. They believe that there is only one god, but it's interpreted differently for everyone, and that's okay. Their god is the Samburu god, ngai, and it's plausible that you or I have another god, but it's just our interpretation of god.

Our wazee don't want to convert other people to their religion, make other people believe what they believe, or be the ultimate authority on matters of religion. It's okay with them if people have different understandings or interpretations of god, as long as religion is not used as a weapon. After all these years of Western cultures trying to tell everyone else that they know best and others should convert to their belief systems, I think it's time we learn something from them. Religion isn't something to be forced down someone's throat, used as a tool for gaining power, excusing war, or dictating morals. Spirituality and beliefs can be very powerful things, and that power shouldn't be abused.