ICWA
LETTERS

Institute of Current World Affairs
The Crane-Rogers Foundation
Four West Wheelock Street
Hanover, New Hampshire 03755 U.S.A.

AR-10
Sub-Saharan Africa

Andrew Rice is a Fellow of the Institute studying life, politics and development in Uganda and environs.

The Miracle Man

By Andrew Rice

MAY 20, 2003

KAMPALA, Uganda–Pastor Simeon Kayiwa often saw angels. They brought him messages from God, he said — sometimes good news, sometimes bad. A relative would die if he didn't forsake wickedness. The relative didn't listen, and was mysteriously shot dead. Lightning would strike a woman from his congregation if she didn't pray. She prayed, and on the fourth day came a bolt from the blue. It missed.

"My relationship with God," Kayiwa liked to say, "is due to the fact that I actually met Jesus." Kayiwa claimed that in 1977, the son of God appeared to him in a waking vision and told him he was a chosen man. That he would be a miracle worker. Since then, Kayiwa had always taken it for granted that God was looking out for him.

So when, in 1994, an angel came to him in a dream, saying he would soon receive a white envelope in the mail, the minister listened closely to God's instructions.

"Do not reject what's in that envelope," the angel said.

Sure enough, a letter arrived three days later via Federal Express. It was from someone named Rochelle Gibler. An American businesswoman in her thirties and a devout Catholic, Gibler had traveled the world, investigating reports of the miraculous. Someone had told her that Kayiwa was using the power of God to cure people of AIDS. Could he prove it, she asked?

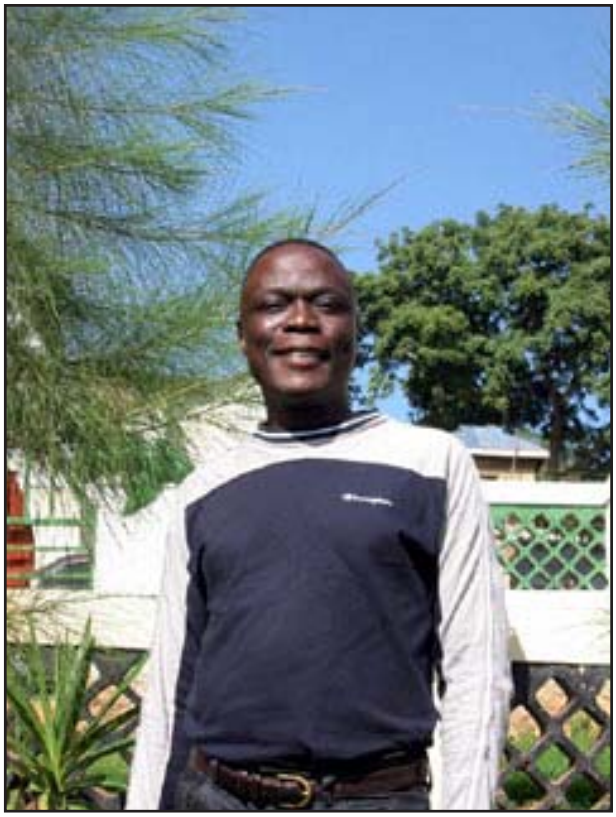
Kayiwa called Gibler up. Come to Uganda and see for yourself, he said.

Gibler came. She talked to people who said their HIV test results had gone from positive to negative after praying with Kayiwa. She interviewed doctors who confirmed their stories. She met Kayiwa, and came away convinced that he was indeed "the genuine article," as she would later write in her book *The Power of Miracles*.

"I have made a judgment call," she concluded. "Simeon Kayiwa does not lie."

When he met Gibler, Kayiwa was already a prominent man within Uganda. At 38, he was one of the progenitors of his country's Great Awakening, perhaps the most important single social movement to arise in Uganda during the past 20 years. His Namirembe Christian Fellowship was born in the dying days of President Idi Amin's regime. Kayiwa liked to tell visitors like Gibler that when he was starting out, preaching in his living room, he had just 12 followers—a number with scriptural overtones. Now he led a congregation of thousands. Many of his original apostles became pastors themselves, starting their own churches all over the country. Kayiwa claimed that over 2,000 churches are affiliated to his own in this way, and estimated that he was responsible for saving two million souls. He was the chairman of the National Fellowship of Born Again Churches, a powerful interest group.

Then Rochelle Gibler entered his life, and offered him entrée into an entirely



Simeon Kayiwa, on the grounds of his Namirembe Christian Fellowship, May 2003.

different world—one of money, fame and encounters with movie stars. (Or at least Steven Segal.) She took him on trips to London, where he gave interviews to the BBC and the *Daily Mail*. She gave him money to expand his church, and improve his lifestyle. She introduced him to affluent friends in the United States, who showered him with even more gifts and cash.

"He was my closest friend," Gibler now says.

At the time, it seemed to Kayiwa that God had blessed him once again, by bringing such a generous American into his life. "When I met Rochelle," he told me, "I said to her that she was going to do something by her writing that would boost the kingdom of God."

Gibler did write about him, first for a magazine she published, *Miracles and the Extraordinary*, and later in her 1998 book. There, she entitled the chapter devoted to Kayiwa: "Miracle-Worker Extraordinaire."

But then something changed. On April 21, 2003, nine years after their initial meeting, Gibler published another article about her friend, this time in the Uganda daily newspaper *The Monitor*. Under a headline, "Kampala Pastor Lied To Us," Gibler recounted another side of her relationship with Kayiwa, telling of a man who demanded pornographic movies delivered to his hotel room, and boasted that God had given him power over life and death. She suggested the minister had stolen money from her. And, most disturbing to many readers of *The Monitor*, Gibler said Kayiwa had used witchcraft and curses, the tools of Satan, to punish—and sometimes kill—his enemies.

"He's not a miracle worker," Gibler said in a recent interview with Andrew Mwenda, a popular local radio talk-show host. "I view him as a spiritual terrorist and a serial killer."

Gibler offered little substantiation for her claims, but in Uganda, where the existence and potency of magic, witchcraft and the Devil are widely taken for granted, the charges were taken seriously. The local police announced an investigation. Kayiwa was forced to step down as chairman of the National Fellowship of Born Again Churches, pending the organization's own internal investigation.

Uganda's huge evangelical movement was left deeply shaken and divided. This was not merely because Kayiwa was one of their own. The born-again churches were founded on miracles. They owed their explosive growth to their pastors' simple appeal: A man like Kayiwa could heal your sickness, could make you rich, and could keep you safe in a city where the rules of existence can be ruthlessly Darwinian. "It's not hope in the future," said Dr. Joseph Serwadda, an evangelical minister and old friend of Kayiwa's. "It's faith now."

But what did it mean for the born-again movement if one of its founders, a bona-fide Miracle Man, turned out to have been working for Satan all along?

"He was seen as a father to the gospel scene here," said a distressed Dr. Serwadda. "No one knew about any of *this*."

* * *

Uganda is a devout nation. When white missionaries first came here, at the end of the 19th Century, they were uniformly struck by how readily Ugandans embraced Christianity. Indeed, in those early days it was black converts, not white visitors, who did most of the arduous work of carrying the gospel to the hinterlands.

Kampala's Anglican Cathedral, which stands at the top of Namirembe Hill, traces its lineage back to the work these first missionaries. Among the three main religions in Uganda, Anglicanism has traditionally been the privileged one, the confession of the ruling classes. But in recent years, the Cathedral has been losing congregants, as people have streamed—quite literally—down Namirembe's slopes, to Pastor Simeon Kayiwa's church. They've traded the stolid splendor of the Cathedral for a concrete-floored, metal-roofed room; their pews for plastic chairs; their hymnals for a ten-piece band; and the ritual of sit/stand/kneel for a swaying, dancing, sweaty brand of worship.

Precise figures for the number of Ugandans who call

themselves born-again are impossible to come by. The movement was so marginal in 1991, the last year for which census figures are available, that evangelicals were simply lumped under "other." But church leaders claim that anywhere from five to ten million Ugandans have been "saved." Those numbers are no doubt exaggerated, but even the lower estimate would represent a fifth of the country's population of 25 million.

Evangelical culture seems omnipresent, in part because many of its most recent converts have been young university students—the very people most likely to get influential jobs at newspapers, on radio stations, or in the government. I grew up in South Carolina, which proudly calls itself the buckle of America's Bible Belt. But nothing in my life prepared me for the God-fearing fervor of Ugandans. "What religion are you?" is a question I am constantly asked; total strangers invite me to church.

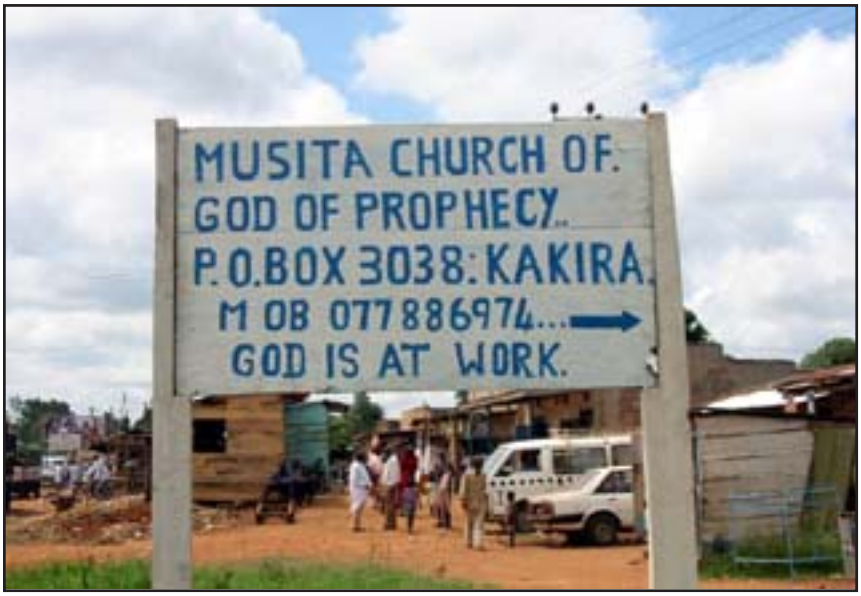
Signs of evangelical influence are everywhere, from the backs of beat-up cars adorned with "Jesus Saves" bumper stickers, to the presidential palace, where born-again First Lady Janet Museveni always seems to be hosting some prominent American evangelist, scolding Ugandans for having premarital sex, or lecturing foreign-aid workers that their efforts to promote women's equality are not what God intended. (Uppity women are to blame, she told one recent conference, for the catastrophic outbreak of homosexuality in the west.). The Lighthouse Television station broadcasts religious programs like Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club" into thousands of living rooms.

The station's success illustrates how telegenic American evangelists have helped their Ugandan counterparts along. But Uganda's Great Awakening is not a foreign import. Rather, the movement has largely sprung up from below, from self-taught preachers working with little more than a Bible and their vocal cords. Driving through the countryside, I pass sign after hand-painted sign for congregations with names like "True Life Holy Ghost Fire Church." There are no white people who live out there—it is Ugandans who are converting themselves.

"The traditional churches refused to transform," Serwadda said. "Everything was as old as the hills the churches stand on. … But I believe that God moved from the traditional churches to these not-so-popular churches."

Kayiwa's followers, like born-again people all over the continent, greet each other as "brother" and "sister," and they have been drawn to him, in part, by the stable structure of support his church provides in an otherwise chaotic world. The Namirembe Christian Fellowship is a rambling complex of buildings—the place has the feel of being perpetually under construction—of which the spacious church is only the largest part. There is a health clinic, a "24-hour prayer room," a snack-food stand (services can run long), and a small grassy knoll, called the "shalom garden," for parties and wedding receptions. Altogether, it feels less like a place of worship than a self-contained community—which is precisely the point. The services Kayiwa offers, like medical care, are ones that the Ugandan government cannot or will not adequately provide.

But it is another kind of healing that forms the crux of Kayiwa's appeal. Among his followers, it is unquestioned that the pastor has the power to make the miraculous happen. Each time I went to visit Kayiwa in his office at the fellowship, I first passed through an outer room packed with dour-looking people, waiting for the pastor to help them with some problem or another: a lost job, a sick relative, an evil spell.



The born-again movement has deep roots in the Ugandan countryside. Everywhere, the roads are dotted with hand-painted signs like this one in Musita, a small eastern town. A settlement of a few hundred people, like Musita, will often be home to two or three competing evangelical churches.

"Those who like me, those who don't like me—they all agree I have supernatural powers," Kayiwa told me the first time we met. "They just don't know where the powers come from." Is it God, or the Devil?

The question was still very much hanging in the air the following Sunday, when I went to see Kayiwa in action at his church. It was an overcast day, both literally and figuratively. Kayiwa had just resigned his post as the head of the National Fellowship. The newspapers were prying into the history of his ministry and his private life. ("Devil's Disciple?" read a typical headline.)

Kayiwa is a trim, athletically-built

Simeon Kayiwa preaches to his congregation. "Rochelle was expecting a rebellion, she was expecting a division among the born-again churches," Kayiwa told them. "It is all malice. It is all evil."

man, with a thin moustache, detectable only at the corners of his mouth, where it bursts into tufts. As he strode to the pulpit, a blue-robed choir of young women singing behind him, the pastor cast a commanding presence. He wore a gray suit, a crimson silk shirt and a darker red tie. When I had first met him, two days before, Kayiwa had seemed enervated, visibly drained by the controversy surrounding him. Now, before his congregation, he was all defiant energy. His voice, which is smooth and lilting in one-on-one conversation, was transformed: raised in volume and lowered in timbre.

"Praise the Lord!" Kayiwa shouted.

"Amen!" responded the congregation, several hundred strong.

"I am happy that the Devil is defeated!" Kayiwa bellowed. The congregation went wild, hooting and applauding.

The newspapers had been writing awful stuff about him, Kayiwa told the congregation. "Don't be horrified by things like that," Kayiwa implored. It happened to Jesus, too, he said: "Somebody put a nail through his body! So there's always somebody who's never going to be happy, whatever good you may be doing."

A young man stood next to the minister, simultaneously translating his words into the local language, Luganda. One reason the born-again churches have caught on so readily in Uganda is that many ministers preach in the local tongue, making them accessible to the poorer masses, many of whom speak little or no English.

Ugandans tend to be snobbish when it comes to language—the quality of one's English is generally taken as a mark of one's intelligence, sophistication and status in the world—and many educated born-again Christians look down on churches where only Luganda is spoken, preferring to attend places like the all-English Kampala Pentecostal Church, which has a Canadian pastor. Kayiwa tries to straddle this class divide by preaching in English and having a translator, but other ministers told me, with an unmistakable whiff of disdain, that his church draws much of its support from the lower classes.

Kayiwa's services are meant to entertain. He has a beautiful singing voice, and has composed over 250 gospel songs, some of which have become local hits. ("They are even popular among Moslems," Kayiwa told me.) Men in sharp suits do a shuffle-stepping, elbow-flinging dance as Kayiwa preaches, like the JB's backing James Brown. The choir is made up of lovely, fresh-faced girls.

"I emphasize that the girls who stand in the front should be beautiful," Kayiwa says. "So that they may attract those [men who like to] go to the bars, with their beautiful faces. That psychology is involved. … It is very, very hard to lead a human being to believe in God without recognizing that he is a human being first."

On this particular Sunday, instead of beginning with a reading from the Bible, Kayiwa started his sermon by narrating a skit dramatizing the Israelites' crossing of the River Jordan, and the fall of Jericho. A young man playing the role of Joshua, dressed in a white robe and a multicolored headdress and carrying a staff covered with aluminum foil, led a procession around the room. Four members of the choir carried the "ark," mounted on thick wooden beams. Other members of the congregation followed them, some carrying little children on their backs, some balancing jerrycans of water and papyrus mats on their heads.

When the procession came to the "river" (actually the stage), sound effects of rushing water played over the loudspeakers.

"Satan is rising against it, but we will never be beaten," Kayiwa intoned.

The band kicked in with a funky rhythm. The play-

ers crossed the river, and encircled the stage. Some unrolled their papyrus mats and held them up, to represent the walls of Jericho. The music rose. As if on cue, the heavens opened outside, and rain began to beat violently on the church's metal roof. Amid the clamor, Jericho's walls fell, and the players jumped about the stage in jubilation.

Kayiwa started to preach.

"The intent of the Devil is to make your heart melt," he told the congregation. But the Israelites had kept their faith, and God had brought them across the river, and delivered Jericho to them.

"During the time that Rochelle was writing against the born-again churches, [the Devil] was trying to make our hearts melt," the pastor continued. "Rochelle was expecting a rebellion, she was expecting a division among the born-again churches, she was expecting the government to react. But as I learned from sources of mine in the government, they have already discovered nothing. And it is all malice. It is all *evil*."

Kayiwa segued back to the Israelites, and their long journey across the desert from Egypt. "They had nothing but faith in God," he said. Then he returned to his own plight. "Last week, the country was trying to find out where my power comes from, because Rochelle brought doubt into their hearts," he said.

Kayiwa's services are meant to entertain. Here, members of his choir carry a cloth-covered ark, reenacting the Israelites' crossing of the River Jordan.

"The Devil, I have been fighting all my life," Kayiwa went on. He told an old story about a girl who attended the church. She was raped when she was 13, and later fell sick. She tested positive for HIV. "I told her that God would heal her, I kept on strengthening her," he said, punching and swiping the air. "Every day that I told her God would heal her, the Devil's heart melted." Her next test came back negative.

Kayiwa put the question to the congregation: "Where does the power come from?"

A few hands shot upward.

"Where does the power come from?"

The congregation, as one, pointed to the heavens.

Kayiwa's voice rose to a crescendo: "He hates me because I *torture* him! *HA-LLE-LUIAH*!"

* * *

After Rochelle Gibler published her explosive allegations against him in the *Monitor*, Kayiwa kept the local press at arm's length. But when I called him one Friday, asking for an interview, he instantly invited me over to the fellowship. When I entered his office for the first time, he bounded up to me, and shook my hand vigorously.

"I am Simeon Kayiwa," he said, by way of introduction. "The *embattled* Simeon Kayiwa."

His reasoning for talking to me, he later said, was simple: Since his accuser was American, he felt needed an American to refute her claims. "Everyone thinks Africa is all about witchcraft and murder and child molestation," Kayiwa said. "So it is very easy for the rest of the world to believe Rochelle's story."

Subsequently, I went to visit Kayiwa several more times in his comfortable office at the fellowship, which is decorated with embroidery bearing devotional sayings, alongside pictures of Kayiwa, his family, and various prominent friends. The pastor would lay supine on his couch, barefoot, his feet wedged against the far armrest, and hold forth, his small eyes darting around the room as he spoke. In his monologues, Kayiwa would flit from topic to topic—Ugandan history, his travels in America, theology—but he kept returning to his main narrative, the story of two pairs, both allies once, both antagonists now: himself and Rochelle Gibler; God and the Devil. As Kayiwa talked, it was sometimes unclear which of these opposed pairs he was referring to at any given time. In his mind, it was evident, they were more or less interchangeable.

To Kayiwa, the world is divided into spheres of good and evil, with God on one side of the divide and Satan on the other. He knows, of course, that he is on the side of God; his visions have told him as much. When good

things happen to someone close to him—a recovery from a nasty illness, a monetary windfall—Kayiwa is quick to credit God for intervening. When bad things happen—a man rapes a girl, the girl gets AIDS—he sees Satan's hand at work. By Satan, Kayiwa means a real sentient being, presumably with horns and cloven feet.

"It's not an idea of evil. That's like saying *Andrew* is an idea of *journalism*," Kayiwa said. "There is someone called the Devil in the scriptures. He is a fallen angel who used to be in heaven serving God. And he was thrown out of heaven along with those who rebelled against Him."

Kayiwa's Manichean worldview—bad things happen to good people because there are evil beings at work in the world—is widely held in Uganda. Recently, a popular local radio personality who goes by the name of D.J. Shadow became "saved." Best known for traveling around town with a scantily-clad group of women known as "Shadow's Angels," the D.J. renounced his immoral past and told the newspapers, in vivid detail, about the rituals of a Devil-worshipping cult to which he claimed to have once belonged. He intimated that other powerful people were secret Satanists. These stories of a thriving satanic underground in devout Kampala were widely, if not universally, believed.

Why are so many Ugandans ready to believe in a world shaped by an unending struggle between God and Satan? Pastor Martin Ssempa, a 35-year-old evangelist who is a member of the committee investigating Kayiwa, said it was just a matter of culture. "The African understands that the world is controlled by the dual forces of nature and the supernatural," he said. "Look at me, with my nice tie and my masters' degree. I am still very aware of the supernatural forces around me."

Maybe so—but I wonder if the Ugandan notion of evil might also be a defensive adaptation in the face of the country's horrific recent history. If you had seen a million of your countrymen killed by successive military regimes, their bodies fed to crocodiles or their skulls stacked by the roadside, you might be inclined to believe the Devil had it in for you, too.

Still, Ssempa is right in saying that magic, with its roots in the African traditions of animist religion and ancestor worship, retains an undeniable hold over Ugandan culture. Over the year I have lived here, I have heard many Ugandans, even people who are not particularly religious, speak with profound conviction about the existence of all sorts of supernatural phenomena.

Most of this is harmless stuff—to the majority of people, there is a distinction between magic and witchcraft. Magic might involve supporters of a local soccer team putting a hex on the opposition players. (After a tough loss, fans inevitably complain about the other team's *juju*, much the same way an American might fix his aggression on a referee who blew a pass-interference call late in the fourth quarter.) A woman might use magic to make a man fall in love with her. A man will drink a potion to increase his sexual potency.

Believing in magic—or even engaging in the worship of traditional gods—is not necessarily seen as being mutually exclusive to being a Christian. Not long ago, I went to interview an older man at his farm, deep in the countryside of rural Uganda. Throughout the interview, he and his wife repeatedly mentioned that they were "born-again." After we had finished talking, the man and his wife gave me and my friends a tour of the farm. They took us into a small, round, thatched-roofed hut. All over the floor were small milk bottles, painted with ornate designs. My friend Allan, who is from the area, whispered to me that these milk bottles were for use in worshipping the local gods. After we had finished the tour, the man and his wife insisted that we all kneel and pray to Jesus for a safe journey home.

However, Ugandans draw a distinction between magic and traditional religion, on the one hand, and witchcraft. The difference is intent—witchcraft is used for evil ends. Say a man has two wives. The first wife

A sign outside Lwandeti, a Kenyan town not far from Uganda's eastern border, advertises the services of Professor Dickson W. Ofusa: "Herbalist, Astrology [sic], Researcher and AIDS Cure Practitioner." The power of magic and traditional medicine is widely accepted in Africa; it is only when magic is used for wicked ends that it is considered to be witchcraft.

mysteriously drops dead. Suspicion inevitably falls on the second wife. Did she cast a spell on her rival, killing her, the dead woman's relatives will ask. (These kinds of feuds arise all the time, and sometimes result in lynchings.)

Even skeptical Ugandans are reluctant to completely dismiss out of hand the possibility that witchcraft might work. Andrew Mwenda, a *Monitor* writer as well as a talk-show host, is a compact, brash man who proudly claims to be an atheist. But even he seemed slightly shaken when, shortly after *The Monitor* began publishing Rochelle Gibler's accusations against Kayiwa, the editor of the paper, who had been in perfect health, collapsed in the newsroom and had to be hospitalized.

On May 15, Gibler called Mwenda's show from America to discuss her accusations that Kayiwa practices witchcraft. As it happened, I was scheduled to go on the show the next night for a weekly reporters' roundtable discussion. When I walked into the radio station's offices, all the lights were out. Mwenda apologized and said the show might not go on: A huge, unexpected power surge had knocked out the station's equipment. He took me into the studio, which was thick with the acrid smoke of an electrical fire. A technician, frantically working to get the station back on the air, looked up at us as we walked in. "It was Kayiwa," he said. Mwenda laughed. But it was a nervous laugh.

So, are magic and witchcraft for real? The answer, it seems to me, is beside the point. Most Ugandans believe in the supernatural, and fear the power of witches, and the born-again evangelists have exploited that fear. In their preaching, witchcraft, more benign forms of magic, and other supernatural phenomena are all taken as examples of the Devil's handiwork in the world of men.

The born-again churches give their congregants hope that there is someone who can fight the evil of witchcraft, someone who is endowed with supernatural powers capable of countering the Devil: the pastor. Simeon Kayiwa is just one example of this phenomenon. Invariably, the ability to work miracles is an intrinsic part of the evangelical preacher's appeal. In this sense, the born-again Miracle Man is not so different from the witchdoctor, or the benign traditional healer. It's just that his power comes from God, not the gods.

"You can't have good and evil come out of the same mouth," Dr. Joseph Serwadda said. "Does Rochelle know the difference between what is a witchdoctor and what is not a witchdoctor? Does she know the difference between an African witchdoctor and an African preacher?"

* * *

At least in Simeon Kayiwa's own humble opinion, the modern born-again movement in Uganda began one day in 1977, when Jesus visited him for the first time. Kayiwa was in his bedroom, having just awakened from a deep sleep.

"I am sure it was not a dream, because what followed were miracles. He looked just like he does in the magazines," Kayiwa said. "He said to me, 'Wake up, read Isaiah 60, and go and bring my people back to me. Tell them I am the greatest power on all heaven and earth. Tell them to leave witchcraft, and come back to me. I will be everywhere you go, and you will perform miracles and wonders.'

"I said to him, 'I'm nothing. I don't have a car. I don't have property.'

"He said, 'I know, but go.'"

At the time, Kayiwa says, he didn't even believe in God. He was an artist and schoolteacher, a young man, and he was enjoying himself immensely. "I was always laughing at anything having to do with God," he said. "You know Darwin? That theory of evolution? I used to believe those things." He chuckled to himself, like a man recalling his youthful belief in Santa Claus or professional wrestling.

He told a friend of his, a colleague at the school where he was teaching, about the vision. The friend took him seriously. Since Kayiwa could perform miracles, his friend asked, could he help him find a new job?

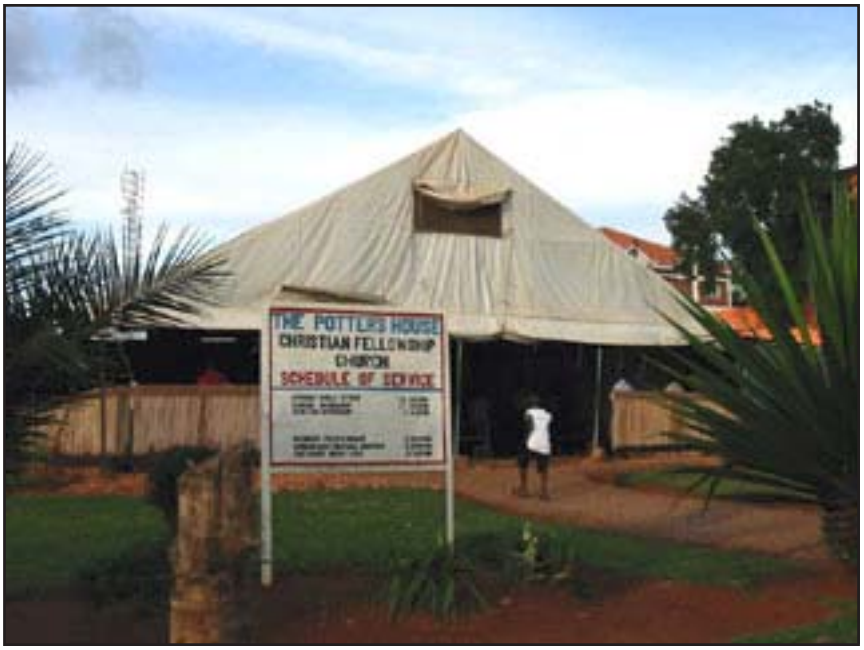
"I said, 'I don't know much about God. Just what I've read in the last two days. And the fact that I met him.'"

But Kayiwa told his friend to write a resignation letter right away. They prayed together, and Kayiwa had a vision. He told his friend to go down to the local post office, and stand around waiting. Kayiwa's friend did what he said, and, sure enough, someone tapped him on his shoulder. He was an acquaintance, who told Kayiwa's friend he wanted to offer him a job at the Greek embassy. It paid three times as much as his teaching salary.

Kayiwa's friend became a very rich man. "His life was transformed by those words," Kayiwa said. (The friend died last year, Kayiwa said. Gibler recounts the story in her book, and says the man himself confirmed it.)

There had been revivals in Uganda before, stretching back to the 1930s, when an evangelist named Simeon Nsibambi began a crusade among followers of the Anglican church. His followers called themselves the *bazukufu*, or "reawakened." But 1977 was not an auspicious time to be starting a born-again church in Uganda. The country's military ruler, General Idi Amin, a Muslim, had declared Uganda an Islamic nation, and led a crackdown on the evangelical churches.

Despite the dangers, Kayiwa began preaching. One



Kayiwa has long since replaced his papyrus-reed walls with more solid ones, but biwempe *churches, like this one, still appear all the time around Kampala.*

night, he dreamt of a star leading him to a house in Namirembe, not far from the Anglican cathedral. The next day, he found the house, which was abandoned. The property was a favorite place for Amin's soldiers to dump dead bodies, and the owner was convinced the place was haunted. The landlord was reluctant to let Kayiwa move in, but the preacher prayed for his son, who had bad ulcers. "He was healed on the spot," he recalled. The landlord let Kayiwa stay, rent-free.

"I prayed to Jesus, asking him how to get people to come here," Kayiwa said, "and he told me to shout. So I went outside and shouted, 'Praise the Lord!' I was not so important, so if they called me mad it didn't matter." People apparently heard his cries, and began to come and meet in his living room.

In 1978, Kayiwa told his followers that he foresaw the fall of Idi Amin within six months. In April, 1979, Tanzanian soldiers, counterattacking after Amin launched a foolhardy war against their country, marched into Kampala, ending the reign of terror.

Ugandans went back to church—but, oftentimes, not back to their old congregations. Instead, many began to flock to temporary structures built on vacant lots. These new churches were called *biwempe*, after Luganda word for the cheap papyrus reeds that the pastors lashed together to make their walls.

Ugandans came to the *biwempe* churches, in part because they desperately needed to believe God could do the miraculous. Their world seemed to have spun out of control. The tyranny of Amin had simply given way to the tyranny of other thugs. Not far to the north of Kampala, people were being slaughtered daily in a brutal civil war. People were poor and hungry. And many were dying from a mysterious wasting disease called "slim"—later to be known as AIDS.

"The more society breaks down, the more new religious movements flourish," writes political scientist Jeff Haynes in his book *Religion and Politics in Africa*. This has been true in places and times as different as Europe during the Black Death, when millenarian cults flourished, and the American west at the end of the 19th Century, when a "ghost dance" religion, which taught that God would exterminate the white man, took hold among Native Americans being driven from their land. There is a long tradition of such movements in Africa, from Dona Beatrice, an early 17th-century Christian prophetess whom the Portuguese burned for heresy in modern-day Angola, to Alice Lakwena, who led a civil war against the Ugandan government in the mid-1980s, telling her followers that God would protect her followers from bullets. (He didn't.) A cult called The Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments, headed by a Roman Catholic priest, made international news three years ago when about 1,000 of its members committed mass suicide inside its compound and at various other sites in western Uganda.

The *biwempe* churches were more benign, but the impulse was similar. "We came from the rubble of Idi Amin. We were all survivors of very ugly circumstances," Kayiwa said. "There was a time when everyone was so desperate—from poverty, disease, insecurity—and in their hearts they wanted to hold onto anything that was moving. People were giving themselves up [to God]."

"The pain and the torture in Uganda in those years led to the current revival," said Dr. Joseph Serwadda. "People began to trust in God for practically everything."

Serwadda is a rotund man, with a voice that has gone raspy from years as a street preacher. A former Catholic seminarian, he became saved in 1975, and spent time in jail for his beliefs under Idi Amin. Nowadays he, like Simeon Kayiwa, leads a large congregation, and is considered an elder statesman of the born-again movement. (He is filling in as chairman of the National Fellowship of Born Again Churches while Kayiwa undergoes investigation.) But for all his current respectability, Serwadda still remembers the days when the *biwempe* churches were disdained by the elites, repressed by the government and dismissed by the Catholic and Anglican hierarchy.

The new breed of evangelists overcame the doubt-

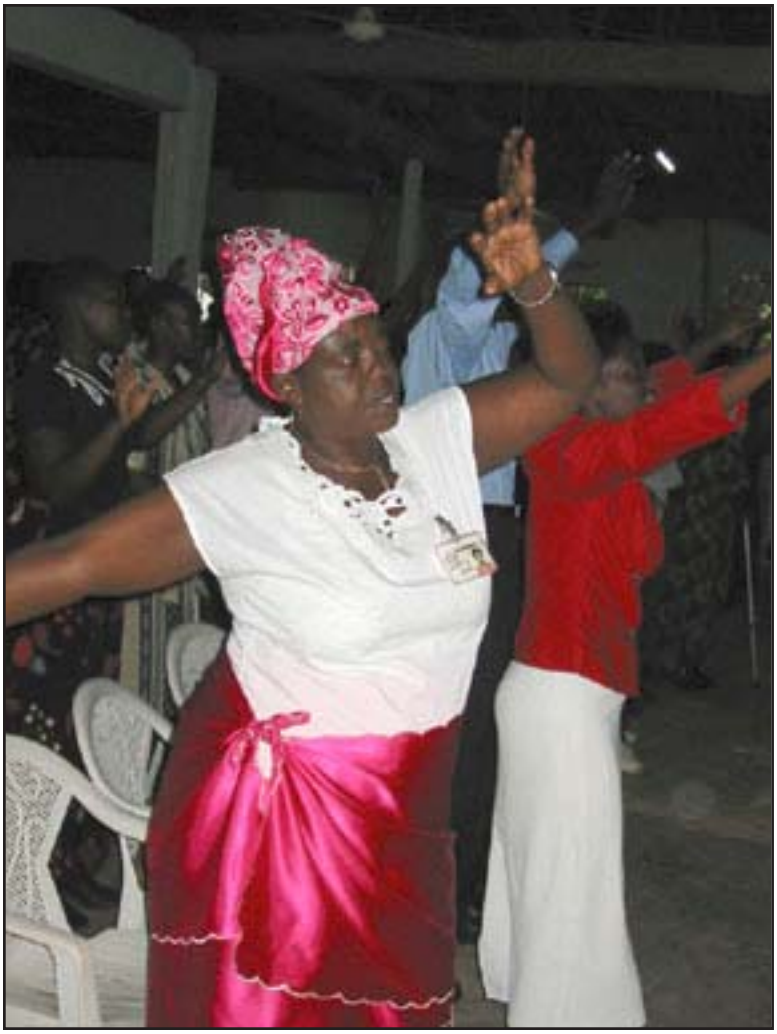
ers, in part by making church fun and a haven of safety and fellowship in a city that was growing increasingly lawless. The services began in the evening and went on until morning—the streets were too dangerous leave church in the dark—so the pastors showed movies like *The Ten Commandments* and *Ben Hur*. There was music and dancing.

"People want something that was vibrant, something that is giving life, something that is today, something that is current," Serwadda said. "What we were able to do was separate God from England. We separated God from Rome. So even though we were a brand-new people with no foundations, we found our foundations in the Bible."

While the foundations may have been in the Bible, the new evangelists' interpretations of the Bible were all their own. Many in Kayiwa's generation admit that, theologically, they were more or less making it up as they went along. They had little or no religious training. They depended on divine revelation and their own assumptions.

At least in the early years, Kayiwa and others were heavily influenced by an older preacher named John Obiri Yeboah. Obiri Yeboah came from Ghana, a West African country where syncretic religious movements, combining aspects of African traditional religion with biblical Christianity, were very strong. Obiri Yeboah was reputed to have miraculous powers, but he was always dogged by dark rumors, much like those that pursue Kayiwa today. He was known as a womanizer, and had a temper. People said he cursed his enemies and practiced witchcraft. He died in 1987, after suffering an asthmatic attack during a church service. Obiri Yeboah's enemies still believe it was a punishment from God.

Obiri Yeboah's style of preaching lived on in evangelists like Simeon Kayiwa. Kayiwa, at least in his early years, incorporated syncretic elements into his ministry, like the use of holy oil, water—jerrycans of water were placed next to crosses around the fellowship property, like libations—and blessed handkerchiefs the receiver was supposed to carry like a talisman. (Kayiwa claims his own association with Obiri Yeboah has been much-exaggerated, and says he has long since disowned some the rituals he picked up from the Ghanaian. "I was learning also," he explains.)



The born-again churches incorporate music and dance into their worship. "The worship of [traditional] African gods was very serious business," said Pastor Martin Ssempa. "Within some of the [Catholic and Anglican] churches it was a well-timed exercise. You go in, you sing three songs, and that's it. The African spirit is unmoved by this."

Back in those days, Kayiwa struck others as a humble, simple man who was very soft-spoken by the standards of his chosen profession. No one knew much about his past; he preferred to speak in English, as opposed to Luganda, so everyone assumed he was well-educated. One thing set him apart, however: "Miracles happened at his meetings with great simplicity," Serwadda said.

Kayiwa made the blind see again. He raised the dead. He made poor people rich. He warned the wicked that God would be punishing them—and punishments came. He kept the faithful safe. In one famous story, Kayiwa reputedly helped Godfrey Binaisa, who had been Uganda's president for a brief time after Amin's fall, escape house arrest by sending him a handkerchief, which kept Binaisa safe as he fled to Kenya.

"The force that kept this small group going," said one early follower, who asked not to be named because he fears Kayiwa might use his powers against him, "was the fact that we saw miracles."

* * *

Rochelle Gibler needed to believe in miracles, too.

Superficially, she could hardly be more dif-

ferent from Kayiwa's converts. Their kinds of horrific experience were entirely foreign to her. She was a well-off businesswoman; her work, she says, involves linking promising companies to sources of venture capital. (Currently she is working with a company that deals in dietary supplements.)

But for years Gibler had been suffering from depression. Her sickness, she came to believe, was spiritual in nature. Though a Catholic, Gibler writes in *The Power of Miracles* that she had also been on a "misguided search for a non-religious spirituality," which involved dabbling in astrology, talking to mediums and using tarot cards. "I never entertained the possibility of them leading me to evil," she writes.

In 1986, Gibler visited the Catholic pilgrimage site of Medjugorje, in Bosnia. A priest laid his hands on her. "His finger barely touched my forehead as he made the sign of the cross," Gibler writes. "There was an odd, woozy feeling and then I lost my ability to stand." She writhed on the ground, feeling a bizarre sensation going through her forearms, "a strong current moving back and forth continually, liked I had plugged my fingers into a light socket."

Gibler subsequently came to the conclusion that the sensation was God's way of cleansing the occult "infection" left in her arms by the tarot cards. At the time, all she knew was that she felt great, "so high that you could peel me off the ceiling," she writes. "From that moment, I knew God and feared him."

Still, Gibler was looking for more. What she felt she needed was proof of God's works. She became, by her own description, a "miracle finder," traveling the world: Ireland, Venezuela, South Africa, India. But it was in Uganda, in Simeon Kayiwa, that she thought she'd finally found what she was looking for.

By the time they met, in 1994, Kayiwa was no longer the humble, hard-up *biwempe* preacher. He had torn down the old haunted house and erected a more permanent church with big wooden doors. He built a three-bedroom house for himself, which his wife and children shared with members of the choir. The congregation was growing, and so was Kayiwa's influence. His acolytes were spreading across the country, starting their own congregations.

The new government of President Yoweri Museveni, who took power in 1986, was quick to recognize the nascent power of the born-again movement. Kayiwa was invited to visit Museveni's official residence in Kampala and his cattle ranch out west. (Later, facing a tough reelection battle in 2001, Museveni would attend a service at Kayiwa's church in return for his endorsement.) Traditionally, each of the established religions was associated with one or another of Uganda's political parties. Museveni, who banned the old parties, began to cultivate a political base among the born-again Christians.

"Only an independent evangelical movement whose Pope is the First Lady was able to break the mold," said Norbert Mao, an opposition member of parliament who is saved himself.

This unofficial presidential imprimatur made becoming born-again suddenly fashionable. Government ministers announced they had been saved. People began to assume that becoming born-again was a route into a social network that led to government jobs, cars and friends in high places. They were largely right.

"Everyone who wants to be seen as someone says, 'I pray at KPC,'" said *Monitor* reporter Richard Kavuma, using the popular shorthand for the Kampala Pentecostal Church.

Yet Kayiwa needed Gibler every bit as much as Gibler needed him. He had recently fallen sick, and local reporters printed rumors that he had AIDS. (He says it was another illness.) Just as distressingly, he was tied up in a very public spat with the owners of the land on which his church was built, who claimed he had stolen it from a defenseless widow.

[Gibler] "came at a time when I needed a friend," Kayiwa said. "I was vulnerable. The whole city had the impression that I was a thief and a victimizer of the weak."

Gibler spent a week talking to people who claimed they had been cured by Kayiwa: Robinah Serunkuuma, who was said to have tested positive for HIV; Irene Najja, who suffered from an extremely severe goiter; Dr. Joachim Kiyimba, who was diagnosed with terminal leukemia; a nephew of the *kabaka*, ceremonial king of Uganda, who had epilepsy.

Gibler was convinced.

"On my visits to Uganda," she would write in her book, four years later, "I have come to regard Simeon as a friend, a rare man of God and a truly unique human being. He has healed at least thirty people diagnosed with the HIV virus, some of them with full-blown AIDS. He has commanded the crippled to walk, the blind to see and the earth to quake, confirming to the world that he is a true prophet. He has baffled doctors, astounded the unbelieving and converted the skeptics. And, after years of knowing him, I have come to believe that Simeon's Namirembe Christian Fellowship may well be a place where heaven touches earth."

Gibler became, depending on whom you believe, either Kayiwa's benefactor or his business partner. Within a week of their first meeting, she had given Kayiwa $3,000 to pay off a delinquent phone bill. And

Dr. David Serwadda inside his church, the Victory Christian Center. The wheelchair he is standing next to, he says, was left behind by someone who regained the ability to walk through faith healing. Such miracles are a central part of the born-again pastor's appeal—and they are what brought Rochelle Gibler to Uganda.

the two of them struck a deal. Gibler would go back to the west and write about Kayiwa's miraculous powers. They would split, evenly, any money she made off her writing.

Over time, Gibler would give Kayiwa $20,000 to pay off the people with whom he was having a land dispute. She put him on a monthly stipend of 1,000 British pounds. All told, she believes she gave him around $40,000 over the course of their friendship.

"He would call me while I would be having a dinner party in London, saying he didn't have any food on his plate," Gibler recalled in a phone interview from her home outside Chicago. "And I'm having caviar. So, immediately I would be at Western Union wiring him a hundred bucks."

Kayiwa, unsurprisingly, remembers things differently. What Gibler sees as generosity, he sees as advances on their 50-50 profit-sharing agreement. "It was really my money," he said. "You should not say that I was completely valueless. You don't write about rubbish and get money out of it. You may pick up gold from the mud, from dirt, but it is valuable. And I have come from Africa, and I have been surrounded by poverty, but I can assure you I was the valued thing. I was the power that she was feeling. I may have come from Africa but I was a power all the same to her."

The disclosure of the profit-sharing agreement has caused great consternation among other pastors in the born-again community in Uganda. "You never do miracles on order," said Martin Ssempa, who is one of the members of the committee appointed to investigate Gibler's allegations against Kayiwa. Gibler and Kayiwa have both strongly denied that they were in any way "selling" miracles.

"The agreement was made out of generosity," Gibler told Andrew Mwenda during her appearance on his radio show. "This was about empowering him, empowering his family, and giving to a man who had *nothing* because I thought he was a man of God."

"I don't believe in commercial miracles," Kayiwa told me. But he said the agreement was legitimate, citing the Bible in his defense. "Moses used to do business. He sold tents. Jesus was a carpenter. He used to make boats."

In any case, Gibler was soon flying Kayiwa to London, where she was then launching a new magazine called *Miracles and the Extraordinary*. The two of them went and did radio and newspaper interviews to promote the new magazine. The cover of an early issue featured a leggy photograph Princess Diana, next to the headline: "Diana: Occult Obsession." Inside was an article about the princess' psychic.

Over the course *Miracles and the Extraordinary's* five issues, Gibler wrote about Kayiwa at least three times. The magazine also promoted an organized trip to Uganda for those interested in seeing Kayiwa's miracles firsthand. Gibler took Kayiwa along on a trip to interview Steven Segal at his home in Colorado. Segal had read about Kayiwa's wondrous works, and was interested in seeing if the pastor could help him with some personal problems.

Kayiwa came away thinking that Segal was less than devoted to Christ. "He was trying to show his power," he recalled. "It was a power thing only."

Nonetheless, Segal showed up on the cover of the next issue of *Miracles and the Extraordinary*.

On these trips to Britain and the United States, Gibler introduced Kayiwa to other friends. He became close to a family in which several members were suffering from cancer; he prayed for them, and they gave him thousands of dollars to spend on the congregation. He met a Jewish man who was suffering from arteriosclerosis. The man took Kayiwa on a visit to his synagogue. While the pastor was there, a large menorah spontaneously shattered. The Jewish man converted to Christianity, and his arte-

riosclerosis stopped bothering him.

During the time he was friends with Gibler, Kayiwa expanded and upgraded the Namirembe Christian Fellowship, paving the floor of the church, adding the health clinic, and building housing for his choir. His own living conditions also improved considerably: He spruced up his house, bought new cars and became a sharp dresser.

Another pastor said that around this time, Kayiwa had confided that "God had blessed him with a lot of money." Kayiwa liked to show off his magazine clippings, and talked about expanding his ministry to the United States. "He said he was an American in Uganda," the pastor said.

To many, Kayiwa's behavior seemed haughty. The pastor acknowledges that, being a "celebrity" in Uganda, he has had to keep in mind that his power comes from God, not himself.

"My position is very dangerous to me," he said. "It can cause me to be proud. But I am very careful. I am very watchful. I have checks."

He doesn't apologize for living well. "There are certain things that you must do as a leader," he said. "It requires you to have a certain kind of lifestyle, being what I am. You have visitors from different parts of the world. You must live in a comfortable place, have a comfortable house, a comfortable car, whatever."

* * *

Gibler had fallen on difficult financial times herself, however. *Miracles and the Extraordinary* went out of business. Her house was broken into twice. A fraudulent check was passed on her bank account while she was staying with Kayiwa. A mining venture she had begun in Uganda fell through. On a trip to explore business opportunities in Congo, that war-torn but mineral-rich country, she bought several gold bars, which turned out to be fake. Today she believes Kayiwa may have been responsible for her problems. "Anyone having anything to do with him business-wise is doomed to failure," she told me. "God had a bigger agenda here."

Gibler's relationship with Kayiwa became strained. A Catholic, she was always pressuring Kayiwa to convert, he claims. He showed me audiotapes he says she gave him, with titles like *The Larry and Joetta Lewis Story: From Protestant Pastor to Catholic Evangelist*.

"She kept on telling me of her dream of me becoming a black Pope," he said.

In 1999, Kayiwa was the featured speaker at a party to celebrate the publication of Gibler's book, *The Power of Miracles*. By all accounts, his speech was a barnburner. "I was thinking that I was going to be allowed to speak the way I know how," Kayiwa recalls. "I battled Mary worship and saint worship."

The speech did not go over well with the largely Catholic audience. "It was, '*JEEEE-SUS*!' You know, that kind of thing," Gibler said. "I found it embarrassing and I told him I would never even consider doing this again. And he was angry."

By 2001, when Gibler returned to Uganda again, she and her old friend had irreparably fallen out. Kayiwa has given various explanations of what happened between them. He's said that she felt spurned by his refusal to convert to Catholicism. He's claimed they quarreled over money after Gibler's book was published. (Gibler stopped observing the equal profit-sharing agreement, she says, because her book turned out to be about several miracles workers, not just Kayiwa.) He's alleged that his local enemies were using Gibler as a tool to settle old scores, reasoning that the local press was certain to take an American's word more seriously than a Ugandan's.

The Sunday after Gibler published her accusations, Kayiwa reportedly told his congregation his accuser was angry because he had rejected sexual advances she made towards him. He has since retracted the allegation, saying he was misquoted.

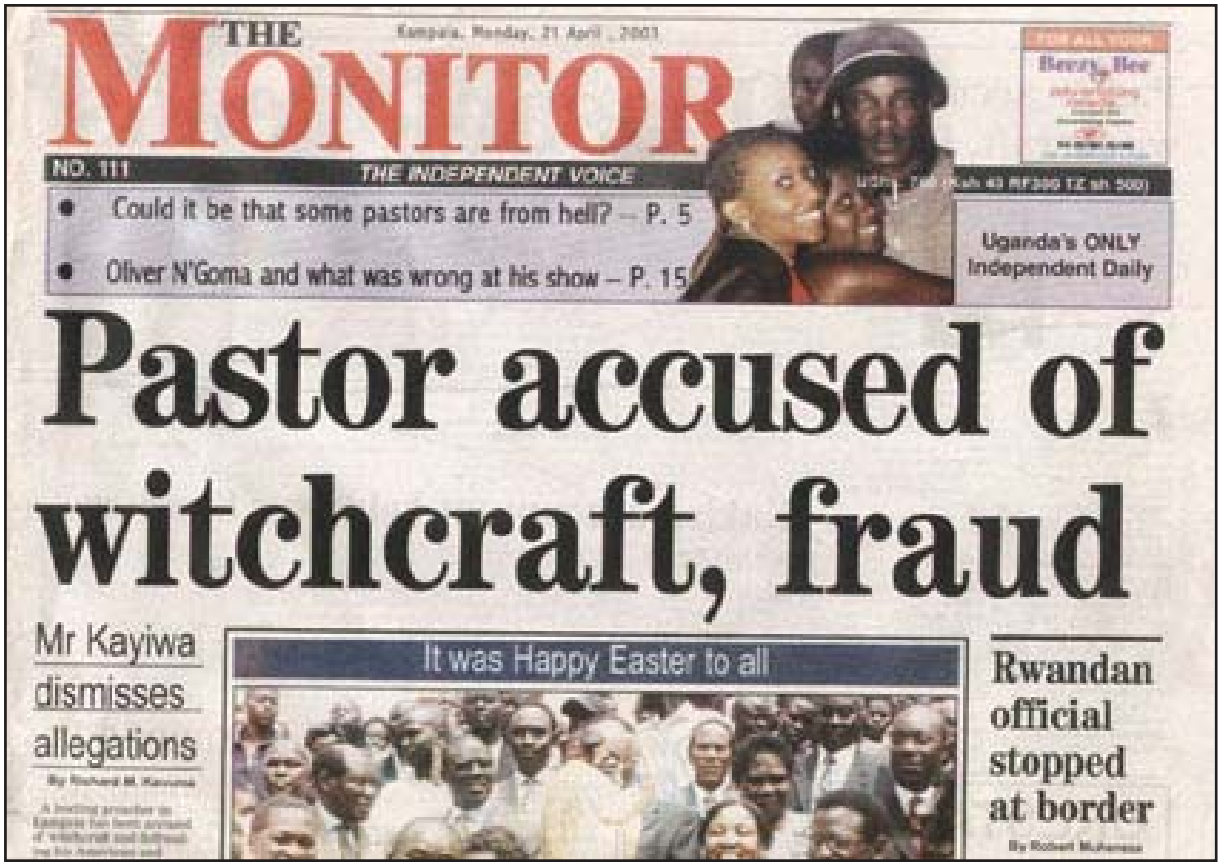
Gibler also denies that there was a sexual dimension to their relationship. "I'm a woman of the world," she told Andrew Mwenda. "If I am going to have a romantic relationship, it certainly isn't going to be with him."

"It's a personal vendetta now," said Dr. Joseph Serwadda, who is generally sympathetic to Kayiwa. "Simeon is not going to tell the truth unless an expert pulls the truth out of his mouth."

In the series of articles she wrote for the *Monitor*, Rochelle Gibler describes the gradual and doubt-ridden process by which, she says, she came to believe her friend Simeon Kayiwa was in league with the Devil. On their trip to meet Steven Segal, Gibler claims, the pastor boasted to the actor about his powers over life and death. Once, he told Segal, a protégé split from him, and he told the man his young daughter would die. Shortly afterwards, the child fell while playing, hit her head on a rock, and was killed.

Gibler financed a flight for Kayiwa and his wife to Italy for a second honeymoon. She claims the couple left behind a $600 phone bill at the villa where they were staying. The staff later told her that the Kayiwas had demanded that pornographic videotapes be brought to their room.

Another time, a friend of Gibler's, a London attorney who had given Kayiwa a great deal of money, asked him to pray for a racehorse he owned. The horse was running in a big race. Kayiwa demanded more money


THE MONITOR

Kampala, Monday, 21 April, 2001

NO. 111 THE INDEPENDENT VOICE

- Could it be that some pastors are from hell? – P. 5
- Oliver N'Goma and what was wrong at his show – P. 15

Uganda's ONLY Independent Daily

Pastor accused of witchcraft, fraud

Mr Kayiwa dismisses allegations

It was Happy Easter to all

Rwandan official stopped at border

The Monitor, *a Kampala daily, carried a weeklong series in which Rochelle Gibler detailed her allegations against Kayiwa. Shortly afterwards, Kayiwa resigned the chairmanship of the National Fellowship of Born-Again Churches, and the police announced an investigation into the charges.*

from the attorney. The lawyer refused to give it to him. "The next day," Gibler wrote in her *Monitor* exposé, "just out of the gate, the horse fell and had to be put down."

As her relationship with Kayiwa worsened, Gibler's family members began to fall ill with strange ailments. One night, she had a dream: Her mother was lying in bed, surrounded by snakes. "And I could see Mr. Kayiwa standing in her room," she wrote. "I knew she was in trouble." The next afternoon, Gibler's sister called to say their mother was very sick.

In September 2001, Gibler traveled back to Uganda to investigate further. There she met a number of anonymous informants who told her about Kayiwa's purported wicked past.

Another American, who was "known for the gift of prophecy," told Gibler that Kayiwa had used "cursed oil" to hurt his rivals. Former congregants told her of people who became mysteriously paralyzed when they tried to break with his church. Kayiwa was having an affair with his secretary, she was informed.

One of Gibler's sources recounted meeting Kayiwa at a gathering of leading Satanists in Mombasa, Kenya. He said Kayiwa was working in cahoots with a prominent local witchdoctor. (The accused witchdoctor, who was named in the story, has denied everything.) The witchdoctor and Kayiwa took part in "homosexual orgies," the informant said. Once, the man claimed, Kayiwa sacrificed a woman in order to assure his election as the head of the National Fellowship of Born Again Churches. "He took her liver and private parts and drank her blood," Gibler said an anonymous witness told her.

Gibler has since offered a cash reward to anyone who can provide proof of Kayiwa's involvement in witchcraft, which she says she will pass on to the police, and has offered to pay for the demolition of the Namirembe Christian Fellowship, since she is convinced that substantiation of his misdeeds—many human skulls—lie buried beneath it.

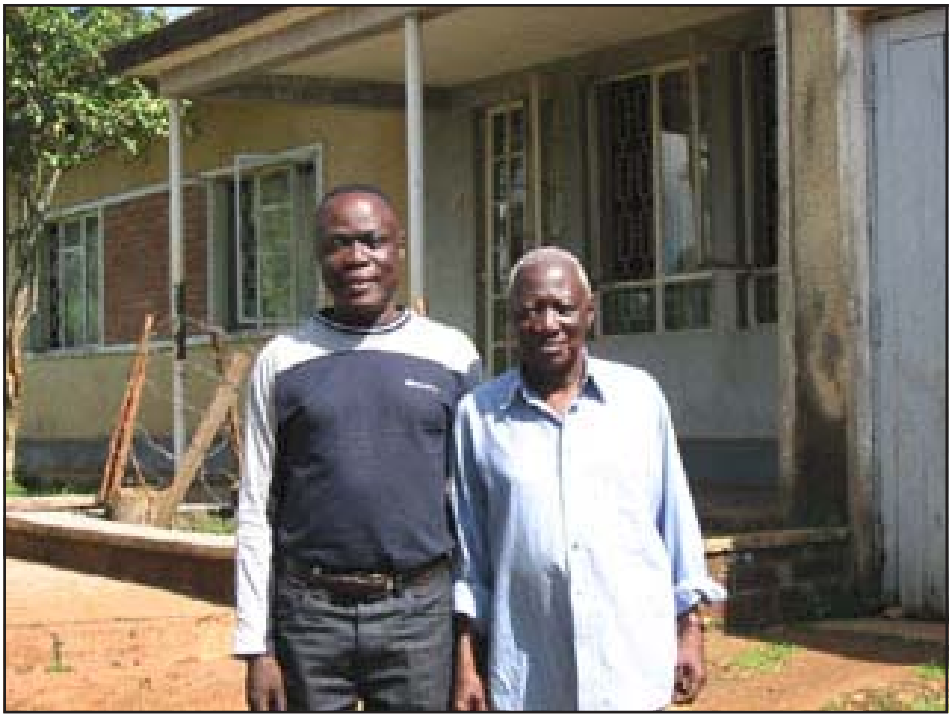
"The startling allegations uncovered in this series may well defy human understanding, for most of you," she wrote in the introduction to her last installment. "And while there are still many of you who fail to open your mind to the nature of evil, can you afford to dismiss so many accusations?

"Can you be certain that God himself has not ordained this investigation?"

***

"She is dangerous," Simeon Kayiwa says of his old friend. "She ends up confusing our country, really."

Kayiwa denies each of Gibler's many accusations



Simeon Kayiwa and Christopher Nabongo, outside Nabongo's home. Strange things were happening there until Kayiwa saved the day.

against him. His secretary and her husband, he says, are friends of his family, and so their relationship is very close, but platonic. (He did once mistakenly call the secretary "Celia," his wife's name, in my presence.) He claims that he has never stolen money, that he has never watched porn, and that he is straight as straight can be. He says he certainly doesn't curse people. And he has never, ever, worshipped the devil.

"From day one, we have been fighting witchcraft," he said. "We have destroyed a lot of witchcraft in this country."

A few days after our initial conversation, Kayiwa took me on a trip to the outskirts of Kampala to show me exactly what he meant by fighting witchcraft. Though it was a stiflingly hot day, and his air conditioning was broken, the minister insisted that we keep the tinted windows of his black Honda Accord rolled up. ("There are some dangerous people in this city," he explained. "They like to pour acid on people.")

Slowly, he negotiated his small car over the rough dirt roads. We climbed a hill, and pulled up in front of a modest house.

Christopher Nabongo, 77, came out to meet us. A friendly, white-haired man, Nabongo showed us around the property, and recounted what Kayiwa had done for him. Some years before, he had had a troublesome tenant living on the property. He evicted the woman. Soon afterwards, he said, strange things started happening. Glass bottles came from nowhere and shattered on the floor. Rocks flew through the windows. His mother was nearly speared by a bottle of hot sauce, which had somehow propelled itself out of a locked cabinet. Furniture started levitating. Things caught on fire.

Nabongo went to his Anglican minister, who said he could do nothing about the problem—in fact, he recommended he visit a witchdoctor to get rid of the demons. Instead, Nabongo went to Kayiwa.

"When I parked my car [outside], all of the action stopped and the demons ran away," Kayiwa said. "I didn't even need to pray. When I arrived they disappeared."

Nabongo nodded in agreement. It was all true, he said. The man had miraculous powers. "I am very disappointed to hear that people are now against him," he said.

Kayiwa laughed. "It is very funny for me to be linked with a witchdoctor."

I told Gibler about meeting Nabongo, about whom she also wrote in her book. Gibler said she still had no doubt that the miracles she recounted had really happened. But, she added, "I think that God's power had left him by the time that I arrived on the scene." She came to this conclusion, she said, because in all the time she spent with Simeon Kayiwa, she never once witnessed the miraculous powers others so vividly described.

"I never saw one miracle," she said.

This seemed a major point, considering the fact that Gibler had spent hundreds of hours with Kayiwa over the course of several years, and had written thousands of words about him, all in the service of proving the pastor's miracle working powers.

I myself met several people who claimed to have miraculously recovered from various ailments under Kayiwa's care, but their stories were impossible to verify, and I too never saw a miracle *happen*. Reclining on his couch during one of our interviews, Kayiwa told me he would have been happy to show me his miracle-working, but that I had just missed a major crusade the previous week, and might have to wait for a while for another opportunity to witness him in action.

I pointed out that there were dozens of people outside waiting to see him. He replied that, regrettably, those

sessions are private. "Most of the miracles are done here in my office," Kayiwa said. "They make appointments. I help them. We pray together. Because some of these things are embarrassing."

I asked Kayiwa about the flip-side of his miracle-working powers. He had told me that there were plenty of cases of good, God-fearing people, who had plenty of faith and still never got better, no matter how hard he prayed for them. How did he explain that?

"You see," he replied, "the mystery is that people receive miracles by God's grace, not by our choice. Not by the pastor's choice. I would say, from a theological point of view, it goes to tell us all as human beings that this is not our home."

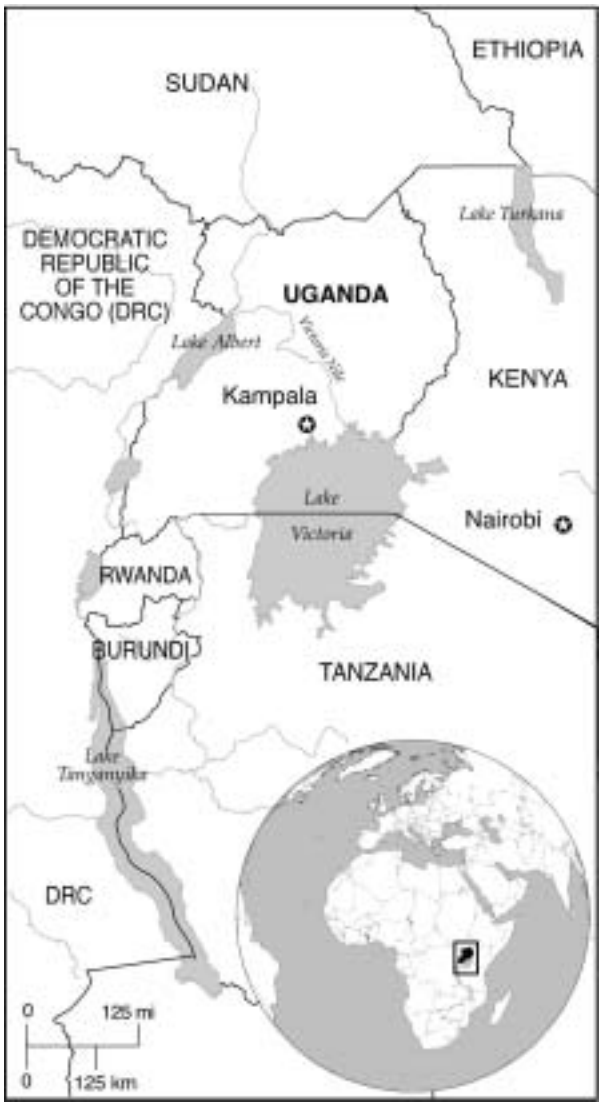
Why would God do that to them, I asked, if he is all-good and all-powerful—powerful enough to heal their ailments? It is a question that has plagued philosophers and theologians for centuries, from Saint Augustine to Karl Leibniz to Hannah Arendt: Why do bad things happen to good people? Why is there evil in the world?

"That's a very interesting question," he replied. "The place where we are going to see the fullness of God in his fullness and his full power is not here. Here we will see God partially. … It is his choice. It is not limited by anything. Nature does not limit him. He may choose to do it if he wants to but he has got other reasons."

A few days later, during our last meeting, Kayiwa and I returned to the topic. This time, however, we were talking about his own case: If God loves him so much, I asked him, why didn't the angel who appeared to him back in 1994 simply tell him to throw away the envelope that contained Gibler's letter?

He considered the question for a moment. "Even what I'm going through right now," he said, "it may be an act of God."

I left the Namirembe Christian Fellowship without any definitive answers to the questions central to the controversy surrounding Simeon Kayiwa. Had he really worked miracles? Had he really cured AIDS? Had he really cast spells? Who was he really serving, the Devil or the Lord?



Who was telling the truth: Kayiwa, or Rochelle Gibler?

In the end, there was only one being who could settle things once and for all. And as always, He was unavailable for comment.

Andrew Rice can be reached via email at andrew_d_rice@hotmail.com

---

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS
Fellows and their Activities

Alexander Brenner (June 2003 - 2005) • **EAST ASIA**
Alex received a B.A. in History from Yale in 1998 and has just completed a Master's degree in China Studies and International Economics at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He is prepariing for his two-year ICWA fellowship in China with four months of intensive Mandarin-language study in Beijing.His fellowship will focus on the impact of a new government and a new membership in the World Trade Organization on Chinese citizens, institutions and regions both inside and far from the capital.

Martha Farmelo (August 2001- 2003) • **ARGENTINA**
A Georgetown graduate (major: psychology; minor, Spanish) with a Master's in Public Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, Martha is the Institute's Suzanne Ecke McColl Fellow studying gender and public policy issues in Argentina. Married to an Argentine economist and mother of a small son, Martha has been involved with Latin America all her professional life, having worked with Catholic Relief Services and the Inter-American Development Bank in Costa Rica, with Human Rights Watch in Ecuador and the Inter-American Foundation in El Salvador, Uruguay and at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Andrew Rice (May 2002 - 2004) • **UGANDA**
A former staff writer for the *New York Observer* and a reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the Washington Bureau of *Newsday*, Andrew is spending two years in east-central Africa, watching, waiting and reporting the possibility that the much-anticipated "African Renaissance" might begin with the administration of President Yoweri Museveni. Andrew won a B.A. in Government from Georgetown (minor: Theology) in 1997 after having spent a semester at Charles University in Prague, where he served as an intern for *Velvet* magazine and later traveled, experienced and wrote about the conflict in the Balkans.

Matthew Rudolph (January 2004-2006) • **INDIA**
When work toward a Cornell Ph.D. in International Relations is finished, Matthew will begin two years as a Phillips Talbot South Asia Fellow looking into the securitization and development of the Indian economy.

Matthew Z. Wheeler (October 2002-2004) • **SOUTHEAST ASIA**
A former research assistant for the Rand Corporation, Matt is spending two years looking into proposals, plans and realities of regional integration (and disintegration) along the Mekong River, from China to the sea at Vietnam. With a B.A. in liberal arts from Sarah Lawrence and an M.A. from Harvard in East Asian studies (as well as a year-long Blakemore Fellowship in Thai language studies) Matt is also examining long- and short-term conflicts in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

James G. Workman (January 2002 - 2004) • **SOUTHERN AFRICA**
A policy strategist on national restoration initiatives for Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt from 1998 to 2000, Jamie is an ICWA Donors' Fellow looking at southern African nations (South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and, maybe, Zimbabwe) through their utilization and conservation of fresh-water supplies. A Yale graduate (History; 1990) who spent his junior year at Oxford, Jamie won a journalism fellowship at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and wrote for the *New Republic* and *Washington Business Journal* before his years with Babbitt. Since then he has served as a Senior Advisor for the World Commission on Dams in Cape Town, South Africa.

ICWA Letters **(ISSN 1083-429X)** are published by the Institute of Current World Affairs Inc., a 501(c)(3) exempt operating foundation incorporated in New York State with offices located at 4 West Wheelock Street, Hanover, NH 03755. The letters are provided free of charge to members of ICWA and are available to libraries and professional researchers by subscription.

Phone: (603) 643-5548
E-Mail: ICWA@valley.net
Fax: (603) 643-9599
Web Site: www.icwa.org

Author: Rice, Andrew
Title: ICWA Letters - Sub-Saharan Africa
ISSN: 1083-429X
Imprint: Institute of Current World Affairs, Hanover, NH
Material Type: Serial
Language: English
Frequency: Monthly
Other Regions: East Asia;Mideast/North Africa; South Asia; Europe/Russia; The Americas

Institute Fellows are chosen on the basis of character, previous experience and promise. They are young professionals funded to spend a minimum of two years carrying out self-designed programs of study and writing outside the United States. The Fellows are required to report their findings and experiences from the field once a month. They can write on any subject, as formally or informally as they wish. The result is a unique form of reporting, analysis and periodic assessment of international events and issues.