

2005

Views from Loughcrew

Patricia Clark

Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvr>

Recommended Citation

Clark, Patricia (2005) "Views from Loughcrew," *Grand Valley Review*: Vol. 29: Iss. 1, Article 11.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvr/vol29/iss1/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Grand Valley Review by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

VIEWS FROM LOUGHCREW

(Convocation: fall 04)

After the bus ride and the guide's words about culture, history, cairns,
after the climb in sunlight, the path traversing the hill, the way steep,
and after our leg muscles pushing away an ache, then easing.
After the grass worn almost to dirt and our care to avoid
sheep droppings, after all this: alert, stepping around, catching our breath.

After the key and the opened iron door that creaked, rusty with lichen,
after being counted off in sevens, "now you and you, you too, okay,
last one, and you" – Then the packs set down, the torches switched on,
the cautions about not touching the limestone carvings with our fingers—
then in through the passageway entering the tomb, hunched over
to make small, fitting that space.

The megalithic site at Loughcrew conceals drawings etched with a sharp stone—
circles, lines, petals spread in circles—nesting under an arc of stone and earth still
roof-dry and tight after five thousand years. Light filtered down, in, the sun
trembling in June air. They knew enough of stars, those ancestors, the solar transit's
mystery, to mark the solstice—on that date, yellow light warms the backstone
of the cairn, making a wedge of color and illumination that nudges east.

Now the struggling back outside, the rush of seven people toward air and the blue
extravagance of sky—County Meath spread out below, the River Boyne
glittering, and rocks everywhere, more stones tumbled like sheep, more tombs
nearby. *Holy of holies*. Where can we sit, if not on another grave? We take off
our shoes and lean in sun, backs easing where they fit, against white stone.