

Bad casting doesn't spell doom for Reagan

The curtain goes up today. Ronald Reagan is starring in the biggest show his 70 years have known.

Unfortunately, the cast stinks. It would be putting it nicely to say Reagan's views never have met with much sympathy on campus or at the Emerald.

As we said in our November endorsement of Jimmy Carter, Reagan's displayed knowledge of the state of the world invites laughter, pity and fear. His economics will crown oil companies kings of the financial and political world, and will

ours

spell the doom of any conservation ethic established under Carter. On top of everything else, Reagan knows nothing about Washington.

His supporting actors (note the gender) are equally weak. War-hawk Alexander Haig, the NATO commander during Richard Nixon's secret bombings of Cambodia and Laos, takes over the reins as Secretary of State. James Watt, the new interior secretary, boasts a record that is anything but environment-conscious. The show just started and already it suffers from poor casting.

But we should fight the temptation to give up on the play before the end of the first act — the plot may compensate for the acting. Besides, it's the only show in town. Even die-hard Democrats such as House leader Thomas O'Neill say they'll give Reagan a few months grace before making his life miserable.

Like it or not, Reagan is president of the United States. We should make an attempt, therefore, to give him a fair shake, to objectively consider what he does in his first months in office.

It won't be easy for Reagan, and the press will



watch with scrupulous eyes, to be sure. It will watch his adjustment to Washington politics, his attempts to fill the void left by departing liberals, his ability to carry through on reduce-big-government promises, his tendency to spout simplistic solutions to complex problems before understanding them fully.

But Reagan's first day as president will be far from negative. Even his most vehement critics will admit he takes office today on a positive note. The hostages are coming home. The 40th president moves into the White House without the nation's

most frustrating monkey on his back.

He'll go to bed tonight with the knowledge that America is happy; that he still must contend with the gargantuan problems of inflation and unemployment, but that he can do it without the added weight of the hostage crisis.

He also knows he has the blessing of 40 million voters.

It's a pretty good start. We're willing to sit through a few more scenes before declaring the show a flop. And if it is successful, it won't be the first good play to overcome a lousy cast.

yours

What's the beef?

So Chester Faller, director of the Physically Limited Union of Students, thinks that the Fishbowl discriminated against people with wheelchairs (Jan. 8 Emerald). Well, Mr. Faller, who cares? I mean, it's not as though you can't get food. You can be served in the cafeteria, in the Skylight and the Fishbowl. So what's the beef? Just because you can't sit in the upper seats of the Fishbowl you want the University to spend a couple of thousand dollars making it accessible.

There are literally hundreds of seats you can reach, so why do you want those particular seats? To me it is just plain stupid. My mother has been confined to a wheelchair for the past seven years. Not once has she complained about something being inaccessible. Not, mind you, because everything is accessible. She simply understands that she has a handicap and she understands that the world cannot be totally accommodating all the time. I wish Mr. Faller would realize the same thing.

In these budget-conscious days, I'm sure that my money can be put to better use than to make the upper level of the Fishbowl accessible to a few cry-baby handicapped people who don't have the guts to swallow their pride and problem. But please don't make your problem my problem. I have enough to worry about.

Next thing you know, Mr. Faller will want the Forest Service to put ramps up all the Oregon mountains.

Daniel Paul Moore
Sophomore, Arts and Sciences
El Salvador

Somewhere in the fog of my childhood I remember history classes spent venerating the spirits of those intrepid freedom-fighters who figured prominently in the American Revolution. Indeed, but for those revolutionaries this country of ours would not be the bastion and beacon of world freedom and democracy that it is (no snickering allowed).

Page 4

This morning, however, I heard on the news that the El Salvadorian regime's "security forces" had killed over 800 "leftist guerrillas" in one week and had burned their bodies in an open grave. Further, the United States was going to encourage and facilitate repression (that's a euphemism at best) of the leftists by giving the El Salvadorian government five million in aid, including arms.

My question is: Is there no irony in all this? It is my perception that the "leftists" (i.e., everything left of the extreme right) in El Salvador are ordinary people fighting against the same forces of repression that stood in the path of American colonial freedom in the 1770s. Yet if El Salvadorian revolutionaries threw boatloads of government tea in their equivalent of Boston harbor it is certain, is it not, that the American government would supply the guns to shoot them?

As an American, how does that make you feel? Crummy? How will you feel next time you send your tax money in to the IRS (Defense Department)? Helpless? Culpable? Finally, how do you feel about celebrating the American Revolution? Hypocritical? Thank goodness there is only one America — it is doubtful that the rest of the world could survive another.

Cory Carlson
1st year, law

Take back the air

Unfortunately, two paragraphs were omitted from my letter to the editor (Jan. 14) misleadingly entitled "Fishbowl smoke." This particular letter was a masterful piece which should have been presented in its entirety or not at all. Nonetheless, I will now attempt to patch things up.

In the first of these omitted paragraphs I reveal the one place in the EMU where the non-smoker can eat with any predictable degree of freedom from smoke (quaint little alcove across from Main Desk). I then share with the Emerald's readers a recurring nightmare in which I

am forced out of the EMU by a band of bold, indiscriminate smokers. I don a gas mask and go running through the EMU grabbing bagles, apples, etc., which I store in a rented locker in Lawrence Hall. At this point I lapse into self-pity reflecting on the injustice of it all. Obviously, my point is that the smoking problem is not confined to the Fishbowl, although the Fishbowl does seem to be the armpit of the smoking problem within the EMU. Which reminds me, everyone who smokes in the Johns should be lined up against a wall and tickled to death.

In the second omitted paragraph I lament the fact that I have thus far been unable to make a serious evaluation of the Fishbowl's new decor due to excessive eye irritation, poor visibility (the neon lighting does seem to cut through the haze a bit though) and my obsession with preserving my lungs well into the 21st Century. (All things considered, does the decor in the Fishbowl deserve serious consideration?) I'm sure it will blend very nicely with the inevitable tobacco stains but who's going to see it anyway besides non-handicapped smokers?

The two-thirds of the student population which, statistically, does not smoke is evidently expected to adapt to the intrusively unhealthy and unpleasant smoking habits of the minority. What gives here? Non-smokers unite! Take back the air! Be forewarned: the meek shall not inherit their two-thirds of the EMU.

Yvonne Vowels
Senior, Asian studies

Mentor at peace

I am submitting this letter to express my appreciation for the article I asked Jim Gersbach to write on Vincent Simonton, but primarily to state what was excluded from the article in Friday's Emerald. The article mentioned that Vince and I were friends. True enough, but the connotations of this word do not adequately relate my perception of our

relationship — mentor would be a more cogent term. Mentor is a word that means wise and trusted counselor or teacher; it is an expression that isn't used much anymore. Granted, Vince didn't consider himself to be wise, but then neither did Aristotle or Socrates, not that I'm drawing a comparison, but for me Vince was a great teacher.

Before meeting Vince I had never heard the term gerontology, or realized it was a field of academic, social, psychological, biological, or philosophical study. Yet, due to my experience with, and impression of him, I investigated the field when I first came to the University in 1979. I will be graduating in June with a B.S. in Gerontology. I always looked forward to having a class with Vince. He enjoyed being on campus immensely, and seldom failed to cut up in class or express his wit and humor. We started our course work in gerontology at the same time, and took one class together almost every term. He was a special kind of friend, a special kind of person. Even though I had never worked with the elderly before, nor did I have many elderly friends or the influence of experiencing my grandparents, after knowing Vince I was convinced that that's what I wanted to do; and I am. Vince frequently commented that I could carry on and fulfill what he would be unable to, and this I shall do. Within my being I carry his influence which shall never be separated from my perspective or my future career in gerontology. He's at peace.

Ted Cope
Senior, gerontology

letters policy

The Emerald will accept and try to print all letters containing fair comment on ideas and topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be typewritten, using 65-character margins and should be triple spaced. Letters must be signed, the author's field of study (or faculty status) noted and should include address and phone number where possible.