



About 1,200 people gathered in the EMU ballroom Monday afternoon for the first-of-its-kind Fall Science and Culture Convocation.

## Fluid prose, large crowd usher in 'new beginning'

By Debbie Howlett  
Of the Emerald

The University "dressed-up" the EMU Ballroom with black ties, full academic regalia and talk of the connections between science and culture Monday afternoon.

"This is a new beginning, a renewal of the University's commitment," said Robert Berdahl, dean of the college of arts and sciences. Berdahl's remarks ushered in the Fall Science and Culture Convocation, an afternoon of academia and an assessment of higher education's value in science and culture.

"This is an especially proper time for us to reassert our belief in academics," Berdahl said at the first-of-its-kind convocation.

On his way to the University this morning, Berdahl said he heard a comment on a radio broadcast about the University refusing to cancel classes during snowstorms but cancelling them for this convocation. Berdahl said that although classes had been cancelled, "education, of a different sort, is happening this afternoon."

After Berdahl's opening remarks, University Pres. Paul Olum, introduced the guest lecturer, Stanford University Pres. Donald Kennedy. Olum spoke of Kennedy's many impressive credentials, which in-

clude membership in the National Academy of Scientists and a two-year stint as the director of the Food and Drug Administration.

Kennedy, wearing the crimson gown of Harvard, began his lecture to the crowded ballroom with an anecdote about the trail west in the 19th century: The south fork, the trail to California, Kennedy said, was marked with small piles of gold ore. The trail to the northwest, the Oregon Trail, was marked with simple signs which read "To Oregon."

"All who could read and write went to Oregon," Kennedy said.

Kennedy spoke about the hand-in-hand attention that ought to be paid to science and culture at colleges and universities and the significance of the scientific and cultural evolution of man.

"It is not unreasonable to suggest that our institutions ought to pay special attention to the bridges between the sciences and humanities," Kennedy said. "People and places strong in the scientific tradition have infrequently undertaken that obligation."

Kennedy asserted three reasons why the "task" of bridging science and culture are important to "all of us," and stressed the reintegration of "the sciences and the rest of culture."

"The first reason is the straightforward problem of scientific and technological illiteracy," he said.

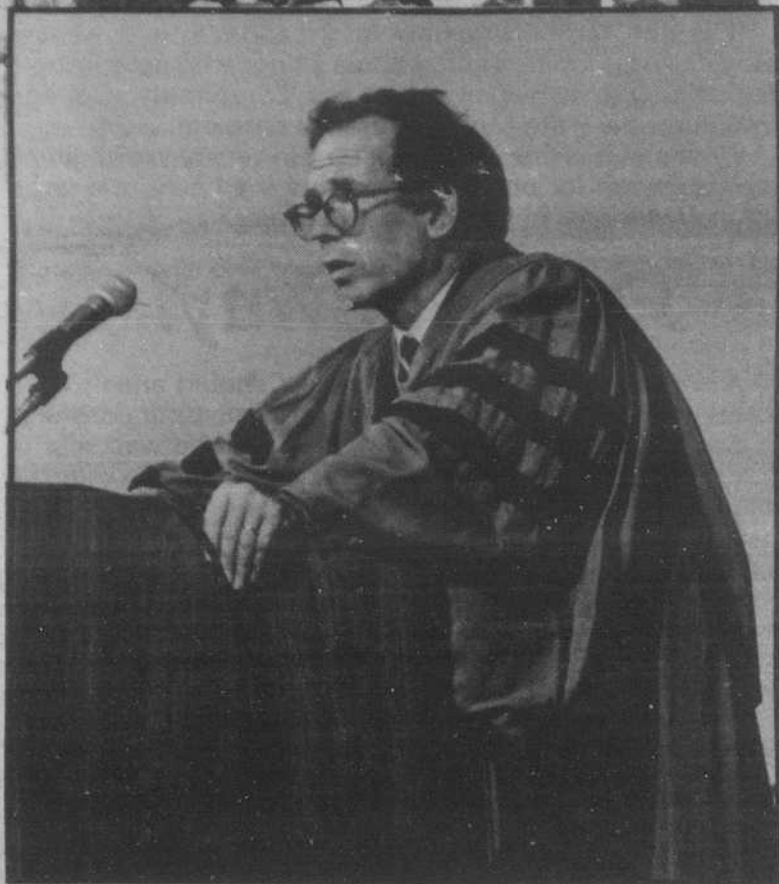
"There are danger signals, all right, and I agree with those who say that among the obligations of scientists is the defeat, through the broadest kind of general education, of this vulnerability to scientific faddism and — even worse — our predilection for uncritical scientific judgements and decisions facing our society."

"Numbers of our fellow citizens can readily be persuaded that they can be made more powerful by pyramids, cured of cancer by eating apricot pits, lost forever in something called the Bermuda Triangle, able to pick cards or bend spoons by concentrating hard enough and made svelte forever by a diet from Scarsdale this year, or Beverly Hills the next," Kennedy told the audience of about 1,200.

"The second reason," he said, "is the degree to which science is separated artificially from other forms of human activity and credited with rules, standards and procedures that do not apply to other kinds of thought and analysis."

"My point is simply that social policy and science are much more intertwined than is commonly thought," Kennedy said.

The major thrust of Ken-



Stanford University Pres. Donald Kennedy called for a renewed construction of intellectual bridges between the sciences and humanities.

nedy's argument was the "isolation between the sciences and 'liberal learning' that may be even more damaging in the long run.

"... there is a troublesome tendency to regard science as providing a separate stream of intelligent thought about what human society is and what it can become," Kennedy said.

Kennedy used the area of evolutionary thought, Darwinism, to make a case for the "elision between the sciences and humanities."

"What Darwin had accomplished, once and for all, was the demonstration that a single way of knowing was no longer possible.

"We cannot be human and whole without reference to both (science and humanism)," he said. "Uprooting the

humanities from science robs us of a critical understanding: that they are joint products of a co-evolutionary process, just as surely as the brain and culture are. That unity is the brightest and most exciting academic vision we could possibly have."

After his speech, as he headed to a seminar, "The Day after Trinity," Kennedy said the responsibility for bridging science and culture in higher education belongs to the institutions, faculty and students.

"Certainly it is our responsibility to make it possible," Kennedy said. "But in the end, the students will have to make most of those decisions."

Top Photo by Mark Pynes  
Bottom Photo by Bob Baker