

the daily arts

Iran: an American lesson in defeat

"Debauché: The American Failure in Iran," by Michael Ledeen and William Lewis. Knopf, 1981, 242 pages, \$14.95.

By JUSTIN CATANOSO Daily Collegian Staff Writer

It's the type of book that leaves a strong-willed American blushing with shame and shaking with anger. In telling its story of a paranoid shah and an inept president, it batters the already bruised credibility of American foreign policy and solidifies the claim that Jimmy Carter of Plains was living proof of the Peter Principle.

Michael Ledeen, the executive editor of the Washington Quarterly, and William Lewis, a political science professor at George Washington University, have constructed an insider's view of the complex chain of events that led to the shah's political demise and Khomeini's insurrection right up until the storming of the American Embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979.

"Debauché: The American Failure in Iran," is clear and decisive in its focus, and also thorough and critical in its analysis of the Middle Eastern scene. Through the first two chapters, the book briefly traces the reign of Reza Shah, his Pahlavi throne and the militaristic endeavors of SAVAK, the shah's secret police. It also explains how, in 1953, the CIA helped place his son, Mohammed Reza, on the throne and the new shah's political relationships with every U.S. president from Eisenhower to Carter.

Unlike the despicable figure Iranian revolutionaries depicted after the embassy siege, the authors' view of the shah lends little support to those claims. Although he is shown as a lonely, worried monarch who constantly squashed the aspirations of potential leaders, the shah is generally portrayed as a sympathetic figure with good intentions.

As the authors explain: "The shah was not a great oppressor. Had he been such, the revolution in all probability could never have triumphed. For the notorious excesses of SAVAK, the shah did not permit the full force of the security organization to be comprehensive work of enemies. Khomeini was exiled, not killed... Mohammed Reza wished to be loved, not feared."

Although the authors afford the shah a great deal of understanding, very little is directed at Carter. In fact, the opening chapters merely set the stage for the real debacle: Carter's mishandling and misunderstanding of Iran, its leader and its unacknowledged sources of power — the Shi'ite tradition and the clergy.

In all fairness to Carter, the book does indicate in detail that most of Carter's mistakes were caused by misinformation (and downright lies) from U.S. ambassadors and special envoys to Iran.

Despite the historical point of view, "Debauché" does not read like a history text. It flows smoothly from background information to critical observations and uncovered tales:

• Khomeini, exiled in Paris, incited the Iranian revolution not through messengers or secret correspondence, but

through the British Broadcasting Company and European mass media which found him "good copy."

• No one outside of a small circle of friends knew of the shah's long-standing bout with cancer. The disease and strong medication affected his personality, leaving him constantly depressed and even more suspicious of Washington and internal opposition.

• French and Israeli intelligence sources accurately foresaw the revolt against the shah, but the CIA, finding nothing, disregarded the information because it viewed those agencies as inferior.

• Rosalyn Carter corresponded extensively with the shah's wife, constantly stressing America's support of her husband's monarchy.

It is the closing chapters that damage America's foreign policy credibility the most. The Carter administration is vividly shown as a group incapable of handling the Iranian crisis or even knowing how, where or when to start. The president had a plethora of advisors from the cabinet to the State Department, but could rarely decide whose advice to follow.

And Carter's personal integrity, according to the authors, sagged in his treatment of the dying, exiled shah. Although the shah will never be remembered as a bastion of human kindness, the administration's initial refusal to grant him asylum — while begging the favor of the ayatollah — comes across as cold and hypocritical in light of past support.

"Debauché" is a sad and shameful story. The authors do little to mask their disapproval of Carter's politics and policies, or criticize the vacillating government, but why should they? As the cliché goes, the "head" guys are the Boston Celtics. In hockey, everybody roots against the Canadians; in football, it's the Dallas Cowboys. But no one team has received as much attention, been hated more or made winning look as easy as baseball's New York Yankees.

The Yankees are a team up to its pinstripes in tradition — a winning tradition (after all, what team wins 103 of 162 games in one season and forces its manager to resign because the team failed to make the World Series?). This winning tradition is captured in this year's edition of "The Yankees," which is a direct descendant of "The Yankees 1979" and "The Yankees 1980."

"The Yankees" breaks down the history of baseball's most successful team into four eras: the unbeatable teams of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig; the continuing success in the Joe DiMaggio years;

career, but all have traditional, romantic values about love and how it should fit into their lives. Each makes a discovery in the course of his or her necessary love life.

The title story, "The Lone Pilgrim," is about a single woman in her 30s who is content until she meets a man. Her values and habits mesh so perfectly with his that she gives up being the lone pilgrim who "sits at the dinner parties of others, partakes, savors and goes home in a taxi alone."

Elizabeth, of "An Old-Fashioned Story," was expected from childhood to marry Nelson, her parents' friends' son. She hated him. "Elizabeth's friends came down with measles, chicken pox, and mumps, but Elizabeth considered Nelson her childhood disease." One day she looked at Nelson from her own point of view instead of her parents', and she discovered what her parents had never let her find out for herself.

The general theme of the book is love which, in any form, encourages emotional growth. Although the characters were different ages and held different beliefs in these stories, they all

believed in love. It is the one thing above independence that makes life worthwhile.

"The Achieve of the Mastery of the Thing," is a romantic story of love and drugs (they can't mix). Ann, a college student who can't go a full day without getting high, marries one of her professors. She hides her habit from him for a while, but he begins to notice when she spouts wisdom at dinner parties. "Ann's spiritual relationship to the horse is one of the most confusing and deceptive in the world... this is not like a man inside a cathedral," says a gem that left her husband wondering about her sanity.

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Casey Stengel

From George Ruth to ruthless George

"The Yankees: The Four Fabulous Eras of Baseball's Most Famous Team, 1981 Edition. Dave Anderson, Murray Chass, Robert Creamer and Harold Rosenthal. Random House, 232 pages, \$10.95.

By ANDY LINKER Daily Collegian Staff Writer

In every sport, there is one team which everybody loves to hate. It is despised by countless numbers of fans because this team wins with nauseating regularity.

In basketball, the "bad" guys are the Boston Celtics. In hockey, everybody roots against the Canadians; in football, it's the Dallas Cowboys. But no one team has received as much attention, been hated more or made winning look as easy as baseball's New York Yankees.

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Pinter's 'Hothouse' a scorching drama

"The Hothouse," a play by Harold Pinter. Grove Press Inc., New York. \$4.95, 149 pages. By CINDY DESKINS Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The setting is a government-run mental institution, where staff members have sexual relations with patients; unwanted patients and workers mysteriously die or disappear; and mental illness affects patients and doctors.

In 1968, Harold Pinter wrote a play called "The Hothouse," which he left to gather dust until 1979 when he revised it and finally directed it on the London stage last year.

In spite of the time lapse, the play is still of age, and the black comedy, murders and insanity found inside the Hothouse are just as frightening today as they would have been in the '60s.

True to Pinter style, the scenes involve two or three characters and the dialogues are a banter of one or two words from each person. But the meaning is clear, the humor is hilarious and the horror is terrific.

The Hothouse, set up by the British Ministry, is supposedly run by a former colonel. But in actuality, it is run by the technician who works the therapy room from each person. But the meaning is clear, the humor is hilarious and the horror is terrific.

The play takes place on Christmas day when the colonel finds out that patient #6677, murdered because he was bothersome, has reportedly died of "heart failure" and another, #6459, a woman visited by every man in the institution, including the colonel, has just given birth to a baby boy.

This pregnancy, unheard of in an institution, creates one of the funniest scenes between the colonel, Route, and his chief technician, Gibbs.

Route: "What does she look like?" (pause) Gibbs: "Fatish." Route: "Darkheaded?" Gibbs (sitting): "Not fairheaded, sir." (pause)

Pinter has written a marvelous scenario to about what really could happen in a government-run mental hospital. The scariest part is that the whole thing comes off as being frighteningly believable. The only thing that would be better than reading it, would be seeing it.

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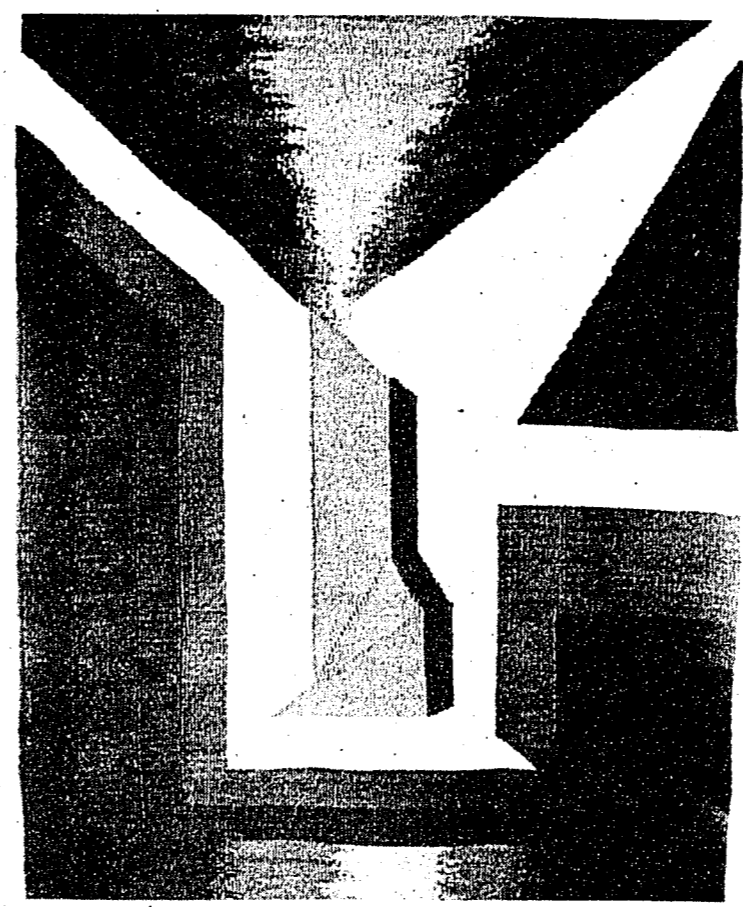
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Wednesday, May 13 14



Unbe-weave-able

The woven artistry of Alice Waagen is on display now through May 20 in the Chambers Gallery, Waagen, a PhD candidate at the University, has specialized in textile's research and production and is currently investigating the development of tapestry form. In her own weaving she applies ancient techniques along with modern designs and precision dyeing to produce contemporary tapestries.

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The Office of University Registrar Announces the Spring Term 1981 Conflict Final Examination Schedule

Printed below is the conflict final examination schedule for Spring Term 1981. Only those students assigned to a conflict examination period should follow the schedule outlined here. All other students will have their final examinations at the time and place announced in the originally published schedule. The interpretation of the time designations used in the conflict final examination period schedule is as follows:

Table with columns: COURSE, TIME, ROOM, COURSE, TIME, ROOM, COURSE, TIME, ROOM, COURSE, TIME, ROOM. Lists various courses and their exam times and locations.

'Pilgrim': love in 13 stories

Pilgrim's Progress. Illustration by Jill Rogers. A Day in the Life, a humorous, fast-moving Super 8 adaptation by Ralf Southard (9th-theater) of the Beatles' song, and "The Fool," a film version of the Beatles' "Fool on the Hill" by Al Winchel (9th-theater), were highlights of the festival.

Can Film Festival reeling in the years

By MIKE HEIMOWITZ Daily Collegian Staff Writer. Over 3,900 miles separate Cannes, France, home of the famous film festival, and State College. But that distance was bridged somewhat Friday night at the second annual Can Film Festival in the HUB Assembly Room. The festival, organized by the Student Film Organization (SFO), showcases the best of student films made during the year. The festival was open to anyone who made any film in any theater class last year. There were between 20 and 30 entries, said Dave Talacka, president of SFO. Awards were given out for first, second and third place plus two honorable mentions. A six-person committee picked the winners. "To make the committee, a film had to be pre-screened by a pre-screening committee in which 12 to 15 people sorted out the films that were worthwhile," Talacka said. This year's first place finisher was "S & M," a six minute film by Dietrich Brandt. "S & M" is set to music by Todd Rundgren and Tomita and consists of a snake eating a live mouse. Brandt made the film last year as his final project in Theater 252. The star of "S & M," Freddy the snake, belongs to a friend of Brandt's. "The snake doesn't eat vegetables," Brandt said.