

The Pendulum

Biographer shares leadership knowledge in speech

Morris uses Reagan and Roosevelt as leadership models

Bethany Swanson
Reporter

numerous biographies, some of which he read from.

He referred to Roosevelt and Reagan as "TR" and "RR" throughout his speech, using their acts of leadership to make his points about the true leader qualities.

"He who cannot dramatize cannot govern affectively," Morris said, making the point that great leadership lies in the ability of a figurehead to command the attention of his audience, moving their emotions and affecting their feelings, much like an actor would.

Morris included certain "requirements for actors," Morris said, actors, or rather the implied "leaders," must have a certain amount of command, or as he called it, "that mysterious ability to retrieve attention and retain it."

According to Morris, both "TR" and "RR" had large, self-confident egos and maintained a checked self-certainty that helped allow them to rise to and keep their positions of great power and leadership.

Morris noted that Roosevelt used "I" so much in his book, "Rough

Riders," about his many trips to Cuba, that some critics said it should have been titled "Alone in Cuba."

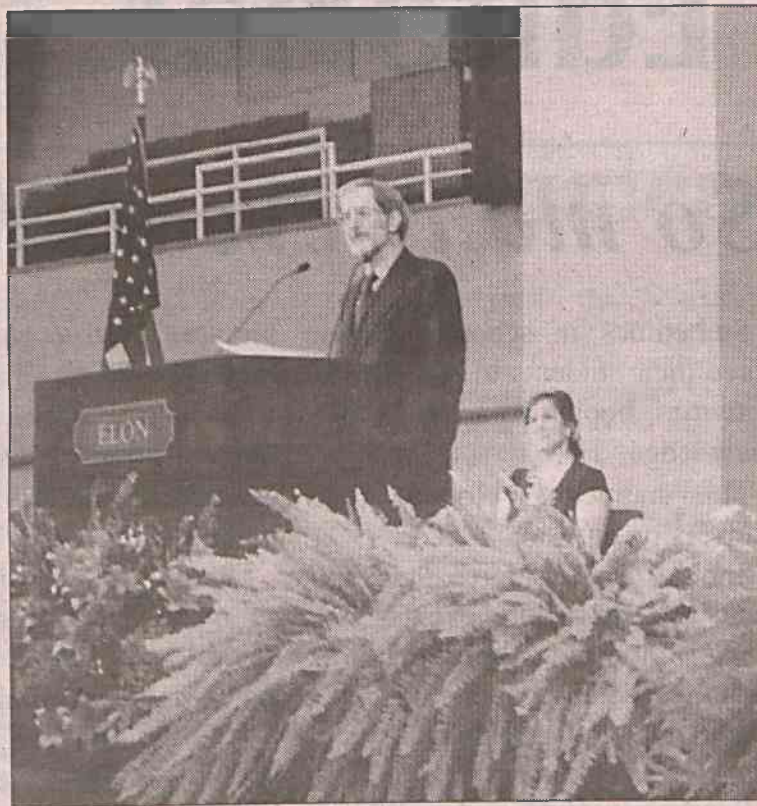
For every story about "TR," Morris made sure to include a story about "RR," who he knew personally. He talked about Reagan's personal diary entries, reading one of them that recalled the amount of "SOs," or standing ovations he received during his speeches.

Though the entry noted many standing ovations, Morris maintained that Reagan was not vain, but yet still very self-aware.

His message to Elon students in regards to ego and self-confidence was that it is important to be aware of yourself and know what you can do, but it is also always important to know what you cannot do as well.

Alex Nickodem, SGA president of the freshmen class, found Morris to be the most interesting part of the evening. "I found it fascinating that he's talked to all those world leaders," Nickodem said.

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Christine Irvine / Photographer

Morris wrote biographies for Ronald Reagan and Theodore Roosevelt. He was the first biographer to be appointed by a president to record the president's life. He encouraged students to be modest but always confident.

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