



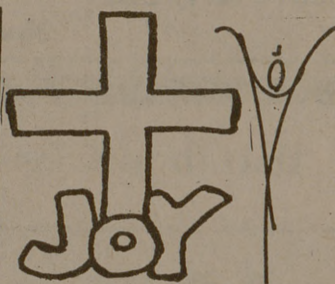
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# Thomas, theater arts professor, resigns

By LILLIAN FOREMAN  
Room 304 of Bizzell Hall will be empty July 7, 1976. The smooth pine bookcases filled with books on directing, theater arts, plays, and family pictures will leave only outlines of dust on the shelves because Dr. James Thomas, assistant professor of theater arts, is resigning after teaching at A&M for only one year.

He cites the lack of proper facilities, low pay, excess teaching of non-theater courses and little cooperation from the administration as his reasons for leaving.

Dr. John Joy, former assistant professor of theater arts, also left last year after one year of teaching for the same reasons, Thomas said.

The theater arts classes and the Aggie Players have no facilities of

their own for rehearsals so they must share the MSC auditoriums with Aggie Cinema and various other groups.

Thomas said that he and Bob Wenck, assistant professor of English and theater arts, spent approximately 40 hours one week reserving various spaces for rehearsals of the musical "Celebration" that was presented April 12-17.

"The administration doesn't see any pressure for theater lab facilities because the theater arts degree program is not bona fide," said Thomas, shaking his head.

"We even asked for a tin building but the administration said it didn't want any temporary buildings erected on campus," said Thomas.

The theater arts department lost their stage and rehearsal area when Guion Hall was torn down in January and February of 1971 to make room for the university center.

"Many administrators feel that the university is where the students and the faculty are. This is not restricted to A&M only," said Thomas.

Administrative problems have also occurred between the English

and theater arts departments, he said. The theater arts department is located on the third floor of Bizzell Hall which is across campus from the English department in the Harrington Complex.

"The English and theater arts departments just can't seem to get together. We're told one thing and then treated the opposite," said Thomas.

"There is such a great separation among the deans, the department and the students."

Some theater arts courses have been canceled, said Thomas. He feels that the theater arts department hasn't been treated as a separate entity and is used just for teaching speech courses.

Dr. David Stewart, head of the English department, said that Thomas was hired to teach theater arts courses; but it was assumed that since he taught theater arts courses he was capable of teaching speech as well.

According to Thomas, the administration has also said that the theater arts department must function as a club. One-half of the funds for the theater arts program are derived from box office profits, one-fourth bookstore profits that are distributed to clubs, and one-fourth from university sources that are allocated through the college of liberal arts. These funds must be used wisely because they are allocated for specific things.

"For example, some funds are specifically allocated to buy the lumber that is used to build the sets.

Because of this type of arrangement, bookkeeping gets very messy," he said.

Thomas said that the theater arts department lost approximately \$2,000 on "Celebration" because live theater doesn't appeal to all of the residents of the community.

"Bryan-College Station is a rural community. The people work hard and there is no time to get dressed up to go to see plays after an 18-hour day," said Thomas.

"The live theater requires people to listen for two to three hours and keep abreast of events and ideas that are happening and have a wide tolerance for eccentric behavior that is different than their own," he said. "These qualities aren't present in a rural community."

Thomas loves his plays, the audience, and the applause. He said he feels great admiration for the students that participate in making the productions successful.

"A play has to be something that is close to you," he said. "This is the philosophy of directing."

Even though he enjoys working with students, Thomas said that the long hours of directing without extra compensation has created hardships. With a \$12,500 salary, Thomas said he finds it difficult and economically "trying."

"Money isn't the major thing, but it helps," he said.

"I was promised \$13,150 if I stayed but the raise wouldn't even cover my rent increase."

The coordinating board report currently lists the following base-

level faculty salaries. This is put on a nine month basis as reference to tenure, said Lasell, assistant director for

nig.

Professor .....

Associate Professor .....

Assistant Professor .....

Instructor .....

"An instructor without a

degree (Ph.D.) is usually

\$10,995 but Thomas was

his Ph.D. when he was

instructor at \$12,500,"

Thomas received his

November from The

Texas. His rank was then

to assistant professor but

has remained the same.

"I hate to see Dr. Thomas

A&M. He's a man of great

promise," said Stewart.

Thomas said that he would

see the administration

improvements in the theater

partment by hiring a full-ti-

teer arts instructor and by

laboratory facilities.

"Theater arts has been at

25-30 years and it won't

impulse will always be here,

Thomas.

FTC criticizes

Euell Gibbons

commercials

WASHINGTON (AP) —

ing the fruits of the wild

been fine for the late Euell

says the government, but a

right for him to do it on

commercials for ready-to-

(FTC) has announced that

the agency that produced

Benton & Bowles, has

won't use a similar pitch

ture.

The FTC claimed that the

commercials, all for Post

were "unfair and deceptive

of their tendency to influe-

ture to engage in danger-

havior" — namely to eat

that could be poisonous.

Gibbons, a longtime natu-

proponent and author, die

heart attack Dec. 29, 1975.

The four disputed comm-

featured him touting the

such things as cattails, pine

parts and wild berries, along

"my, back-to-nature cereal,"

Nuts.

The commercials were

even before Gibbons' death,

FTC pursued the case in

similar approaches in the

the consent order prohib-

ton & Bowles of New York

representing that a wild

part of it is suitable for

sumption in its raw state

clearly cannot be confused

with other plant that is

toxic.

Violation of the order is

able by fines of up to \$10,

offense.

The FTC said the Gibbons

commercials "undercut a

recognized safety principle.

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