

AUTHOR'S NOTE: 1971

THE MAN imprisoned in our play belongs more to the moment than to the age in which he lived. For more than a century, Henry David Thoreau was dismissed as a gifted weirdo. Only a rebel like Emerson's handyman would dare to question the benefits of technology! Why, it is obvious to any educated mind that technological advancement and progress are synonymous. To create a better world, all we have to do is make things bigger, faster, stronger, or cheaper. But materialism is not the way. THOREAU KNEW THAT. He smelled the smog before we saw it. It smarted his soul before it smarted our eyes. He spoke out; but in those television-less days men were slow to listen. He sang out in nonviolent defiance, but how few men since could carry the tune: Gandhi, Count Tolstoy, Martin Luther King.

It was the material-mindedness of his government which drove the mystic Thoreau to the shores of Walden. His outrage is closely akin to the anger of many young people today. Young Thoreau was disgusted by the lies and confusion which clouded the bloody conflict with a smaller nation, Mexico. The President of the United States (James Polk) had made a pretense of trying to settle differences at the conference table. Then, without a declaration of war or Congressional approval, U.S. forces plunged into Mexico. An inaccurate and incomplete report from the President (which has been lamely explained by the lack of electrical communication) brought authorization from Congress. Hawks and white supremacists of the day cheered. But the intellectual community gasped in horror. The text of the play contains a denunciation of the war actually made by a young Whig Congressman from Illinois— who was not re-elected because of his stand, but who later became the first Republican President of the United States.

American secret agents smuggled in a puppet president from Havana. Overwhelmed by U.S. armor, the Mexicans resisted all the way to the gates of their capital, which fell only when their ammunition ran out. On the side of the invaders, there was hot friction between secret envoys from the White House, an alarmed Congress, and the ambitious military leaders— two of whom became Presidents of the United States and one of the Confederacy.

A captain in the army of General Winfield Scott reported that the American troops acted like savages. They shot noncombatants on trivial pretexts. "Their conduct toward the poor inhabitants has been horrible and their coming is dreaded like death in every village." Another eyewitness, Ulysses S. Grant, wrote in his memoirs: "I do not think there was ever a more wicked war than that waged by the United States on Mexico. I thought so at the time, when I was a youngster, only I had not the moral courage to resign." Grant had the option of resignation, which has not been granted to youngsters of later wars.

According to Santayana, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it." Perhaps this play will jog our memories as we relive the poetic protest of one of America's freest men.

Time is awash in this jail cell. We are not trapped in happenings past. The explosive spirit of Thoreau leaps across the years, addressing with power and clarity the perils of his own time and, prophetically, of ours as well.

—JEROME LAWRENCE ROBERT E. LEE

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THE NIGHT THOREAU SPENT IN JAIL

BY
JEROME LAWRENCE
&
ROBERT E. LEE

October 29–31
November 5 & 6
The Studio Theatre

Information at www.tludramaticmedia.com





THE NIGHT THORAU SPENT IN JAIL is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

CAST (in order of appearance)

Riley Frauenheim
 Caitlyn Norden
 Evelynne Holland
 James Carter Montgomery
 Reece Fellers
 Matt Martinez
 Kay Richardson
 Meagan Kotara
 Erol Morgan
 Alyx Fletcher
 Trevor Nealeigh
 Jacori Gray
 M'Lyn Feuguay
 Abe Ascencio
 Cailin Snitt
 Sara Oltmanns
 Elliott Johns
 Aaliyah Kirton
 Johnny Samaniego-Lozano
 William Hicks

WALDO / PRESIDENT
 LYDIAN
 MOTHER
 HENRY
 JOHN
 BAILEY
 DEACON BALL / GENERAL
 ELLEN
 SAM / SERGEANT
 MINISTER
 EDWARD
 WILLIAMS
 ANOTHER VOICE
 FARMER
 WOMAN
 VOICE
 TOWNSPERSON
 TOWNSPERSON
 TOWNSPERSON
 UNSSEEN VOICE

NOTES

In and around Concord, Massachusetts. Mid 1800s and now. The play features two acts, and will be performed with one intermission of 15 minutes.

ARTISTIC STAFF

DIRECTOR David Legore
 STAGE MANAGER Josilin Brietzke
 SCENOGRAPHY Tanner Lambert
 David Legore
 David Legore
 Fletcher Wright
 Josilin Brietzke
 Evelynne Holland
 Aili Williamson
 Kallie Adkins
 Nicholas Hernandez

SCENE SHOP FOREMAN David Legore
 CHARGE SCENIC ARTIST Josilin Brietzke
 ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Evelynne Holland
 COSTUME DESIGNER Aili Williamson
 LIGHTING DESIGNER Kallie Adkins
 MASTER ELECTRICIAN Nicholas Hernandez
 MEDIA & SOUND DESIGNER David Legore
 ASSISTANT SOUND DESIGNER Julio Navarro
 ACTING COACH Shannon Ivey
 PROPERTIES Isaac V. Rubio
 SEAMSTRESS Linden Williamson
 LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR Geneva Gilley
 MEDIA OPERATORS Becket Jones
 JULIO NAVARRO Julio Navarro
 TAYLOR GARDNER Taylor Gardner
 ABRIL RAMIREZ Abril Ramirez
 MEMBERS OF DRAM 101-111

COVID Protocols

We are thrilled to welcome live audiences back to the Studio Theatre! To keep our students and patrons as safe as possible, we ask that you adhere to TLU's Covid Protocols. Masks must be worn over the mouth and nose at all times. We encourage you to practice social distancing and good hygiene while visiting the Weston Center. We wish you and yours good health, and hope to see you back soon!

SPECIAL THANKS

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 Aili Williamson and Family (iii) • Jonathan Zitelman
 TLU Student Government Association • Friends and families of the company