

# Lyons finds stereotype hard to conquer

By LISA M. SOLLEY  
Jambar Editor

Reactions to his homosexuality were an obstacle too high to overcome, Dr. Timothy J. Lyons said during a press conference at his Austintown home Wednesday.

"I don't resent that people know something that is true. Because it is true," the former dean of Fine and Performing Arts said. "I have a problem with the way people react to my being gay."

Lyons resigned earlier this week in the wake of publicity over his former lover, Brian Scott Blevins, being charged with the murder of YSU senior Kenmore Drake.

Drake was found murdered in Lyons' house Feb.

16. He had been bound and gagged with duct tape and stabbed 50 times with a pair of scissors.

Lyons said the University did not pressure him to resign, but that he chose to resign. He said he had met with Provost Bernard Gillis and they talked about options. Lyons said he never thought of resigning until Gillis told him he would have "an ugly time ahead of him."

Lyons said he felt he could not be effective as a dean because of stereotypes held by the Youngstown community.

"What hurts me most is that I was a good dean and I had to resign because I know I would not have been doing a good job," he explained to a small group of reporters. "I can't change the minds of the Youngstown community."

Although the former dean said he was dealing with a minimum amount of harrassment, he said the issue that was bothering him the most was that, "a man was killed, and he was a good man and I don't want people to forget that."

Although Lyons said his homosexuality is important to the police investigation, he said his private life was his own. "My homosexuality is so damn irrelevant to my professional career," he said.

He added, however, that his effectiveness on the job would have been threatened. He said the Youngstown Arts Council — a group of volunteers who promote and support the arts locally — would not find anything he said credible, and that he needed to raise money for the school and he could not

See Dean, page 12

## Petition backs former dean

YSU — Although Dr. Timothy J. Lyons may feel few support him, there are those who do.

According to Dr. Arthur G. Spiro, music, a petition was circulated among Fine and Performing Arts faculty in support of Lyons. The petition garnered 15 signatures and was then sent to YSU President Neil D. Humphrey.

See Petition, page 12



LISA M. SOLLEY/THE JAMBAR

Solemn: Lyons talks with reporters in his home Wednesday.

## Reactions stir over leave

By JONI DOBRAN  
Jambar Entertainment Editor

With the recent announcement of the resignation of Dr. Timothy J. Lyons, dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts, the University is once again forced to undergo a period of adjustment.

Varied feelings regarding his decision to resign have surfaced around campus, with some people siding with the dean's choice, while others said they feel he should stay.

Al Cox, a junior with an undecided major, stated "I think he should stay. If people start fleeing because of the issue of homosexuality, who's going to be here to fight it?"

He went on to say that he is upset at the many rumors that are circulating around the University.

See Lyons, page 7

# Lyons

Continued from page 1

"You'd think this school is a pile of trash the way people are talking about it. It has no respect and it deserves it. [F&PA] is a good school and this is a good University."

Lori Fink, senior, photography, agreed that Lyons should remain in his former position and brought up the point of his feeling any pressure to resign from University officials. "I don't know if he resigned by himself or if they had a hand in it," she said, "but I don't think he needed to resign. His performance of his job is what matters, nothing else."

Also stating that the dean's performance of his job is the issue at hand was Ross Ivkovich, senior, telecommunications. "I think the personal life of Dean Lyons' was brought in as too much of a factor. I don't think anyone should have brought in his personal life the way it was brought in, because it has nothing to do with his duties or anything else."

As a student assistant in the dean's office for nearly two years, Janine Lockhart, a senior majoring in music performance, worked closely with him.

She said "I'm disappointed, sad — because I think they've lost a great person. Having worked with him as much as I did, I gained a great deal of respect for him."

Concerning the issue of homosexuality, Lockhart said "It's irrelevant. I can understand why Tim thought it was important, but I don't think it was relevant to the way he did his job." She then stated that things should begin to get back to the way they were, because now "a decision's been made and we can move on, not that I'm necessarily happy with that decision."

Dr. Alfred W. Owens, chair, speech communication and theater, echoed thoughts of sadness and difficulty in the wake of the dean's decision.

"His decision was such a personal decision to make and I can't speak for him. The role of a dean is an academic role and it is a leadership role," he stated, continuing, "People within the University turn to deans for leadership, people in the community have expectations of how deans will represent their college, so in that sense, the role of the dean is very symbolic."

"This personal tragedy and the attention that has been brought to the dean because of it would have made it a very difficult decision to make and this is such a great loss," Owens added.

He went on to express that "I ache for him personally and also for those whose lives have, at best, been disrupted. At the same time, though, the University now needs a dean and the leadership he brings. It is very sad. I'm sure it was a very difficult decision to make. I know

it would have been for me."

"So many people in this department and across this campus hold a great fondness for him. Nobody likes to see pain and grief and agony. So many people feel great pathos on a very personal level right now," he said.

A student who said he felt the dean's decision to resign was the right course of action was Jon Willis, senior, trombone performance. He said he doesn't think Lyons was forced into resignation, but that "I think it's better for him."

"I don't think homosexuality is an issue, but I think with all the rumors that it's better for him and for the school as well.

Tina Wincik, a senior telecommunications major, said she thought his resignation was "inevitable. There was really no other recourse, regardless of his involvement. It's a shame, but it was inevitable."

# Petition

Continued from page 1

this effectively now.

According to the 1987-88 *Bulletin*, the College of Fine and Performing Arts has 54 full-time faculty members.

Spiro said he would not release the names of the faculty members who signed the petition, in order to maintain their anonymity. The University made no formal comment regarding the petition.

The petition reads: "We, the undersigned, wish to declare our unequivocal support for Dean Timothy J. Lyons, and we do so because of his major impact upon, and contributions to, the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

"In the few years Dean Lyons has been with us, we have seen an administrator who has vision, long range goals, plans for the future, one who has already been instrumental in setting into motion the realization of some of these desired ends for the good of the College and the University."

"Dean Lyons is an administrator whose working day

knows no limits; and during his first year with us, he attended virtually every recital, concert, theatrical production and art exhibit the College sponsored. Almost to a person, the faculty marveled at his ubiquitous attendance record. But then for a Dean who was truly interested in what his faculty was about, this was the only route to follow. And while he traversed this arduous trail, it was inevitable that he would bruise occasionally those who believed they had established for themselves a sinecure within the College."

The petition continued, "Dr. Lyons has sought quality of performance in all of the arts and has been partial to none. He has made academic life within the college more than tolerable by eliminating the causes for much of the abrasiveness that had existed before. This is a Dean who commands our professional and personal respect, and we request of the President that he listen to our voices, that he respect our combined professional evaluation, that he pay no heed to the cries of bigots, and that he allow our Dean, Dr. Timothy J. Lyons, to continue as the steward of our College."