PlayNotes

Season | 47 Issue | 1

PS
PORTLAND STAGE

Talley's Folly

by Lanford Wilson

Discussion Series

Due to Covid-19 our regularly scheduled discussions are moving online. Head to portlandstage.org/talleys-folly to view our discussion schedule and Zoom links.

Curtain Call
These discussions offer a rare opportunity for audience members to talk about the production with the performers. Through this forum, the audience and cast explore topics that range from the process of rehearsing and producing the text to character development to issues raised by the work.

The Artistic Perspective
Hosted by Artistic Director Anita Stewart, is an opportunity for audience members to delve deeper into the themes of the show through conversation with special guests. A different scholar, visiting artist, playwright, or other expert will join the discussion each time.

All discussions are free and open to the public. Show attendance is not required.

Interested in addtional discussions?

Portland Stage strives to be a forum for our community. While we can't currently gather in the same ways we're used to, we are adding some exciting new opportunities to connect to our community near and far. Stay tuned to portlandstage.org for more info, and if your group would like to discuss plays at Portland Stage feel free to email literary@portlandstage.org and we'll see what we can work out.

A talkback with the playwright, director, and cast of Marianas Trench *by Scott C. Sickles as part of the 2020 Digital Little Festival of the Unexpected.*

Talley's Folly

by Lanford Wilson

PlayNotes Season 47 Editorial Staff
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Portland Stage Company Educational Programs, like *PlayNotes*, are generously supported through the annual donations of hundreds of individuals and businesses, as well as special funding from:

Maine Arts Commission

George & Cheryl Higgins
Susie Konkel
The Onion Foundation
The Virginia Hodgkins Somers Foundation

Table of Contents

Focus Questions

by Sophia B. Diaz & Jordan Wells

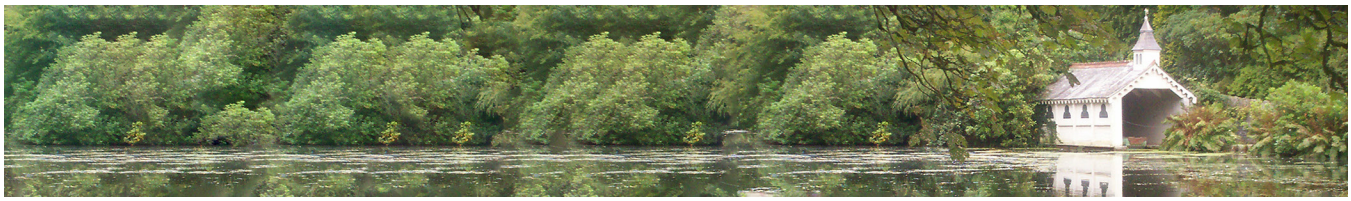
1. In *Talley's Folly*, Matt implies connections between his and Sally's jobs as an accountant and a nurse, respectively, and their personalities. What are some careers that you are interested in or that you think your personality might be well suited for? Why do those careers interest you?

2. Matt mentions the many places he lived and the different nationalities his family identified with. What are some places you and/or your family have lived or identified with?

3. In *Talley's Folly*, we learn how recent and current events (WWI, The Great Depression, and WWII) have impacted the different characters' worldviews. What are some recent and/or current events that have made you think about things differently?

4. The character of Matt starts and ends *Talley's Folly* by breaking the fourth wall, or speaking directly to the audience about the play. Why might a playwright have a character speak directly to the audience?

5. Lanford Wilson indicates that the characters in *Talley's Folly* have accents that they may or may not be aware of. Everyone has an accent that is shaped by where they're from and who they grow up around. What are some things that are unique about the way that you speak?



Pre-Show Activities

by Sophia B. Diaz & Jordan Wells

1. In *Talley's Folly*, Matt and Sally share experiences that have helped shape who they are. What are the five most impactful moments of your life thus far? How have they shaped who you are and how you interact with the world? Make a timeline of these events and describe their impact on your life.

2. Find some definitions of the word "folly." Based on what you know about the play, write down your prediction about what *Talley's Folly* could mean in the context of the play.

3. The boathouse in *Talley's Folly* is a significant location for the characters. Draw/paint/collage an image of a place that has significance to you. Try to include as much detail as you can remember.

4. In *Talley's Folly*, Matt tries to solve a mystery in his life. Write about a time that you tried to solve a mystery. This can be based on real or fictional events .

5. In *Talley's Folly*, Matt writes Sally letters that tell her about his days. Write a letter explaining what you've done so far today. Go into as much detail as possible. Find a partner and read your letters to each other. See if you and your partner can repeat back the story of each other's days with as much detail as possible.

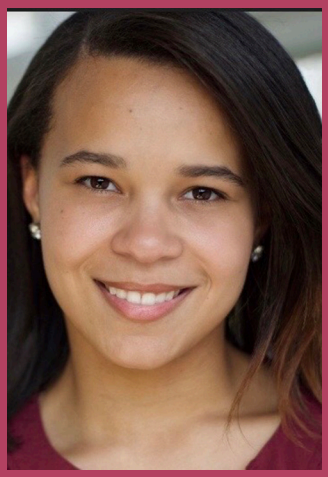
Thoughts from the Editors:
What do you like about your hometown?

Not everyone can say that they live about half an hour from Disney World. My otherwise small, ordinary hometown of St. Cloud, Florida, is unique for its proximity to some of the country's most popular tourist destinations. Commercials in the 90s and 2000s advertised "Kissimmee St. Cloud" as the place to stay for "the closest and most affordable accommodations in the middle of Central Florida's best attractions." When people ask me where I am from, I usually say "south of Orlando." While people may not know my town, I know I had a unique experience growing up so close to the Most Magical Place on Earth.

-Sophia B. Diaz, Education Intern

My hometown is unique because it has such a rich history! Savannah is the oldest city in Georgia. It is a beautiful town that sits right on the edge of the Savannah River. If you walk downtown, you can find a variety of shops, candy stores, and restaurants. My personal favorite is the Pirates' House restaurant. It originally opened in 1753 for sailors, but soon became a meeting place for pirates. Local legend says that if you go into the basement of the Pirates' House, you can still find caves that run under River Street to the edge of the river. But don't stay alone after dark! The Pirates' House is one of the most haunted places in Savannah! Staff members have reportedly heard footsteps walk through the old building after patrons leave, seen items fall off shelves, heard screams echo from the tunnels below the restaurant, and even come face to face with ghostly sailors.

-Zach Elton, Directing & DramaturgyIntern

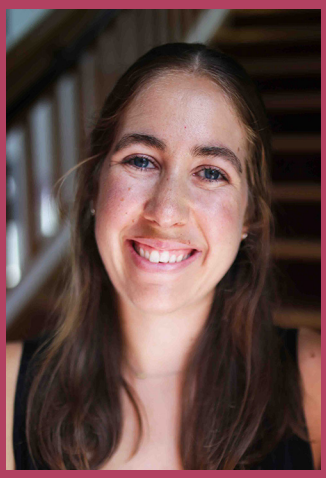


Largo is located right in the middle of Maryland. This means that from Largo, I could easily reach Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, through the Metrorail system, or I could drive up the beltway and get to Pennsylvania, Delaware, or even New York in a few short hours. Growing up I was able to visit New York City, the Jamestown Colony, the Capitol, and the Liberty Bell all on fun school field trips. I'm so grateful that I was able to easily travel to and learn about so many different places, and I know that was due largely in part to where I'm from.

-Jordan Wells, Education Intern

I grew up not far away in Bowdoinham, Maine, a town of just over 2,800 people. What we lack in people we make up for in having the largest freshwater estuary system north of Chesapeake Bay—the very friendly-sounding Merrymeeting Bay. Merrymeeting Bay is truly a meeting place for six different rivers that drain 38% of Maine's freshwater, eventually leading out to the ocean. I grew up hopping in my dad's small hunting boat with our two Chesapeake Bay Retrievers and making our way through the seemingly endless maze of rivers that weave throughout our town. Some mornings we would take a sunrise canoe trip up the shallow Abagadasset River, spotting grazing deer or resting blue herons. Other days we'd dock in the Cathance River at the center of Bowdoinham, and grab some snacks from the country store. My favorite trips were always in the Kennebec River, where I'd be too afraid to blink and and risk missing a five-foot Atlantic sturgeon jump out of the water. We'd take the Kennebec all the way to where it meets the ocean near Popham Beach, or ride it north and grab lunch and groceries in Hallowell or Augusta. I've gotten to see so much of Maine just from putting our little boat out in our great bay in our little town of Bowdoinham.

-Macey Downs, Directing & Dramaturgy Intern



I grew up in Lexington, Kentucky (KY), which is known as the "Horse Capital of the World." However, the thing that Lexingtonians' often feel the most pride for is the University of Kentucky (UK) Men's Basketball team. The state of Kentucky does not have any professional sports teams, so fans are very devoted to the collegiate-level teams. UK has the most all-time wins in Division I college basketball, and holds eight national titles. I have many fond childhood memories of attending games with my family in Rupp Arena and cheering on the Wildcats. During the annual NCAA tournament, I looked forward to wearing Kentucky gear to school in elementary school. In high school, I schemed with my classmates to convince our teachers to let us watch Kentucky play in the tournament's first and second round games during class. Since moving away from home, I have become an even bigger fan. In college, I watched big games in the campus center with other Kentucky transplants, and now I often wear Kentucky-themed socks on game days, especially during March Madness. My dad, brother, and I text each other regularly about recruitment news and injury reports, and we have a running commentary during games. Even though I live over 1,000 miles away from Lexington, when I watch games from the comfort of my living room, I can't help but feel connected to my home state and to all those who bleed blue!

-Meredith G. Healy, Directing & Dramaturgy Intern

About the Play

by Meredith G. Healy

"If everything goes well for me tonight, this should be a waltz, one-two-three, one-two-three; a no-holds-barred romantic story, and since I'm not a romantic type, I'm going to need the whole valentine here to help me..." - Matt, Talley's Folly

Lanford Wilson doesn't want there to be any confusion at the beginning of *Talley's Folly*: it will be a love story, a valentine, as he has Matt Friedman describe to the audience before the house lights have dimmed. *Talley's Folly* is, at its core, a romance. A story about two people, who don't quite fit into the world around them, trying to connect and see if there is the possibility of sharing a future together.

In navigating this relationship, *Talley's Folly* also explores themes of prejudice, tolerance, gender roles, and the conflict between traditional values and modern life. Matt Friedman is an accountant and a Jewish immigrant. Sally Talley is the unmarried daughter of a wealthy Methodist family. On the surface, the two do not have much in common, besides the memorable week that they spent together during the summer of 1943. Now, on July 4, 1944, Matt has returned to convince Sally to marry him.

Talley's Folly is the centerpiece of what has become known as Wilson's "Talley Trilogy." The other two plays that comprise the set are *Talley & Son* and *Fifth of July*. Wilson set these three shows in rural Missouri outside the town of Lebanon, which is the place where he spent much of his childhood. *Talley & Son* is set on the same day as *Talley's Folly*, and the show reveals more of the inner workings and conflict within the Talley family. *Fifth of July* is set in 1977, and the action revolves around Sally's nephew, Kenneth Talley, Jr., attempting to sell the family house.

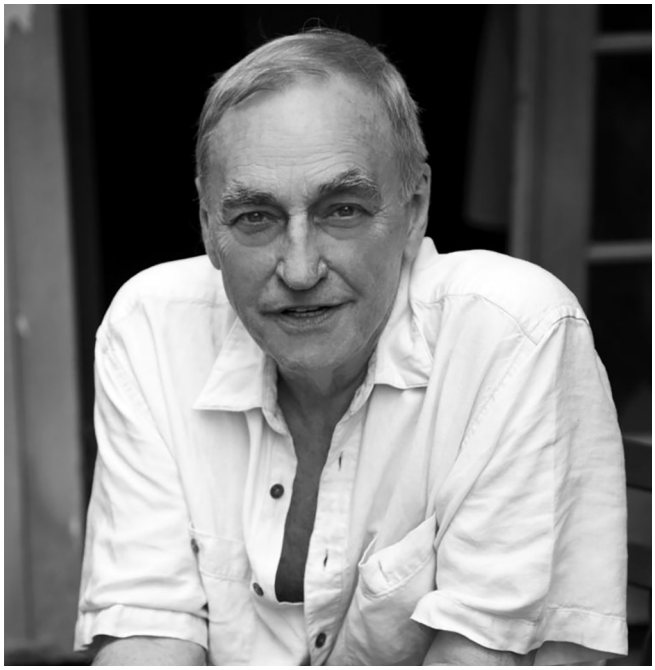
Talley's Folly was well-received by critics when it debuted in New York. For his review in Library Journal, Gerard M. Molyneaux stated, "It is not the plot that holds the reader's interest, but Wilson's craftsmanship, his sense of timing and humor, his sensitive use of language." Walter Kerr, of the New York Times, was won over by the tone and the energy: "*Talley's Folly* is a charmer, filled to the brim with hope, humor, and chutzpah."

In 1979, *Talley's Folly* premiered at the Circle Repertory Company, of which playwright Wilson and original director Marshall Mason were founding members. This production then transferred to Broadway in February of 1980, where it ran at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre for 286 performances. The show has since been produced across the country at regional and community theaters, as well as on college campuses. There was a New York revival in 2013 by the Roundabout Theatre Company, starring Danny Burstein as Matt Friedman and Sarah Paulson as Sally Talley. *Talley's Folly* won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1980.

Roundabout Theatre Company's Talley's Folly *featuring Daniel Burstein and Sarah Paulson, 2013. Photo by Joan Marcus.*

About the Playwright: Lanford Wilson

by Meredith G. Healy



Lanford Wilson.

Lanford Wilson (April 13, 1937-March 24, 2011) was born in Lebanon, Missouri (MO), which serves as the setting for many of his plays, including *Talley's Folly*. His parents divorced when he was young, and he then lived with his mother in Springfield, MO, and Ozark, MO, for much of his childhood. He began writing short stories after taking a writing class at San Diego State College, but it wasn't until he moved to Chicago in the late 1950s that he began experimenting with playwriting.

In 1962, Wilson moved to New York City and was not initially impressed with the work being produced on Broadway. He found his artistic home in the more experimental theaters that populated the Off- and Off-Off-Broadway scene. His works were produced in venues like Caffe Cino and Judson Church in Greenwich Village, and La MaMa in the East Village. Wilson co-founded the Circle Repertory Company in 1969 with Rob Thirkield, Tanya Berezin, and Marshall Mason. Throughout its 27 years, the theater produced shows by prominent playwrights including Craig Lucas, Sam Shepard, and Paula Vogel.

Wilson's playwriting style has been described as "lyric realism." Marshall Mason, a director who worked on over 50 productions with Wilson throughout his career, stated, "It's not something Lanford invented, but it is something he happens to do awfully well. It's a kind of realism that I feel is the voice of the native American theater, but it is realism that is elevated in its language. It takes the language people speak and makes it more musical." Wilson himself said, "I write what's in the air." He often wrote about marginalized people on the fringes of society, and was one of the earliest popular playwrights to feature gay and lesbian characters in major roles. Wilson is often compared to the playwright Tennessee Williams due to similarities in their writing style and central themes, including the conflict between one's past and present. Wilson himself, however, would not accept this comparison, and stated in an interview, "I don't compare myself to Tennessee Williams, no, thank you. We're talking Tennessee Williams. He's great, and I'm not."

Despite his initial ambivalence towards Broadway, Wilson had six shows during his career that were produced on the Great White Way: *The Gingham Dog*, *Burn This*, *Redwood Curtain*, *Fifth of July*, *Talley's Folly*, and *Angels Fall*. For the latter three Wilson was nominated for a Tony Award. Wilson achieved numerous accolades during his long career as a playwright. Among them were the PEN/Laura Pels Theater Award (2004) for his full body of work and an Artistic Achievement Award during the New York Innovative Theatre Awards (2010), which honored his lifelong commitment to the Off-Off-Broadway community.

An Interview with the Director: Sally Wood

Edited for Length and Clarity by Meredith G. Healy

Directing and Dramaturgy Intern Meredith G. Healy spoke with Sally Wood, the director of *Talley's Folly*, prior to the first rehearsal about the play, her journey as a director, and the role theater plays in our community.

Sally Wood

Meredith G. Healy (MGH): What elements of the script are you most excited to explore with the cast and the creative team?

Sally Wood (SW): As a whole, I'm excited about how difficult this journey is for these two people. It's very easy to write it off as just being a romance, but people only ever get to the happy ending after a real journey. They have to almost not make it many times before it happens. I'm interested in making that struggle feel real. I want us to sense that we're almost missing that boat five or six times, and then at the last second, with our fingernails, we are able to grab on. That to me is really exciting. The play has also been around for awhile, so I'm looking forward to finding ways to keep it fresh and vibrant. What the characters have to do is relatively simple. Matt tells us in the first moment what he is here to do, and Sally is really clear from the beginning about what she wants. That being said, we still have 97 minutes to tell this story. How deep can we go?

MGH: And it is 97 minutes straight through. There is not the opportunity for Matt to go off and regroup. They are onstage and are in it!

SW: They are in it! And it is really fun to do a play like that with another actor. When you're in a two-hander there is very much a sense of, "It's just you and me against the world." The fact that Dave and Kathy are married makes this even more fun, because that is their real-life experience as well.

MGH: What type of environment do you try to cultivate during the rehearsal process? What does your room typically look like? What type of people do you enjoy collaborating with?

SW: It's really important for me to have a "good" room. What I mean by "good," what a generic term, is that I need a room where people feel safe. I need a room that is fun. I need a room that is somewhat irreverent. I need a room where we have rules and we have guidelines, but that is only a jumping-off point. I want people to look forward to coming to rehearsal. I want people to know that they are going to get their butt kicked when they come to rehearsal. I want for them to challenge me. I'm hoping, by the end of the rehearsal process, that the play isn't what any of us expected. Then I know it is a good collaboration. If people are only trying to fill in what I think, it doesn't work because my imagination only goes so far. It's about what everybody brings to the table. Then the show really becomes something special, because it couldn't exist without everybody. So, I'm not interested in marquee theaters, that to me is the wrong power shift. It's my job as a director to get everybody in that room to do the best work of their lives.

MGH: What has your journey been like as a theater practitioner?

SW: I never wanted to direct. I'm an actor, foremost, but the truth is I'm a very nervous, very scared actor. All I want to do when I get onstage is to get off as fast as possible and not die. But I was desperate to be an actor. I was

told by a lot of powerful people that that wasn't going to happen for me, I didn't have the talent. What I was told when I was in college, by the chair of the department after I had taken one directing class, was that maybe I should try directing. I remember leaving that meeting, tears streaming down my face, and I thought, "Over my dead body, I will never ever direct." So I fought it and fought it and fought it. Even though every time I was in rehearsal, I would sit in the corner and think, "Why don't they do it like this?" I couldn't stop seeing the world of the play from a more global perspective. I think that really good actors don't do that. They only see the world from what they want and what they need. There's a selfishness to it--that term sounds bad, but in the good actors that's really important. They are fighting for everything that they need, and they don't care, they are going to get it! But I was very aware of stage picture, or would think, "That person is totally playing this the wrong way!" And I would squelch and eradicate those thoughts, because the few times that I did direct, it felt very natural, and easy and free. I'm a very different person when I'm directing than when I'm acting. And still, for ten years after graduation, I said no to directing until I was forced into it. The first professional show I did was called *Idiot's Delight*, and had 22 people in it, a massive cast. I remember loving every single minute, but I wasn't able to admit that I loved it. When people would give me compliments about my directing, I would ask if they'd seen me acting! I've always gotten more encouragement when directing. People say I see things that others don't see.

MGH: Do you have any advice for young people pursuing a career in the theater?

SW: I do! My first bit of advice is completely practical, which is pursue it! Theater is awesome and miraculous. It constantly reinvents itself and you will not meet a better group of people than you will in a theater. I will also say that it is really important to have a skill that you can bring on the road. Be it web design, or even medical coding! I have this weird fantasy about doing medical coding. If I could medical code, then I could do it anywhere and any time, and it would pay the bills. What I see happening is that if the career in theater can't pay for itself, then a lot of people leave for good. I feel like it shouldn't have to be that type of choice. The people that I see who continue to do it successfully tend to have something else that they have in their back pocket for when they need it, so there isn't panic in having to go from gig to gig. I have more jobs in a year than most people will have in a lifetime.

MGH: I think acknowledging that it is okay to do something else while you're pursuing a career in theater is so important. It's not all or nothing!

SW: There's nothing more tedious than people who only do theater! Go see a basketball game, read the newspaper, because all that becomes information that we can then use in our work. It couldn't be more important to just globalize yourself as much as possible.

Kathy McCafferty and David Mason are directed by Sally Wood in a socially distant rehearsal. Photo by Mical Hutson.

About the Cast & Characters

by Meredith G. Healy

Name: David Mason
Character: Matt Friedman
42. A Jewish immigrant who works as an accountant. Warm and unhurried, he has a definite talent for mimicry.

Name: Kathy McCafferty
Character: Sally Talley
31. The daughter of a well-to-do Methodist family who works as a nurse. Straightforward and rather tired.

Post Show Activities

by Sophia B. Diaz & Jordan Wells

1. Matt tells a third-person account of his life story in *Talley's Folly*. Write your own third-person account of your life. Feel free to incorporate events from your timeline.

2. Matt addresses the audience directly, even saying "you're all out on the river" to further invite them into the world of the play. How did it make you feel to have a character speak directly to you as an audience member? Write a paragraph discussing how it impacted your perception of the play.

3. In *Talley's Folly* there are several characters who are mentioned but never seen (Buddy, Aunt Lottie, Rachel, etc.). Based on what you learned about these characters from Sally and Matt, write a short monologue from a different character's perspective.

4. After watching the play, what do you think the title of the play, *Talley's Folly*, refers to? Revisit your prediction that you wrote for the pre-show activity. How does what you wrote before you watched the play compare to what you know and think now?

Instant Resources

by Sophia B. Diaz & Jordan Wells

Links to the following resources can be found on our site at portlandstage.org/playnotes or by clicking the titles below in our digital edition.

Una furtiva lagrima

- Description: A page with a video of Luciano Pavarotti singing "Una furtiva lagrima," as well as the lyrics and translation of the piece. There are links to more information about the opera and composer.

Lanford Wilson's Obituary

- Description: An article describing the life, career, and death of playwright Lanford Wilson. Includes information about some of his most notable works.

1920s American Slang Dictionary

- Description: A dictionary of slang commonly used in the 1920s. Includes definition and origin of "the bee's knees."

American Socialism:
From the New Deal to the Green New Deal

By Zach Elton

"Between being what they consider out-and-out anti-American and being over forty years old, and having a beard," Sally tells Matt in Talley's Folly*, "you made a grand hit with Mom and Dad, let me tell you."*

What Sally refers to as "out-and-out anti-American" are Matt's socialist beliefs, practices that her family strongly disagrees with. To her family, nothing is more threatening to the United States' democracy than socialism and communism.

Though the terms are often used interchangeably, there are important distinctions between the two ideologies. While they both fight social and economic inequality, socialism primarily uses democratic government structures to write laws, create programs, and offer assistance to those in need. Communism, on the other hand, is a much more extreme form of socialism that gives the government control over every aspect of society. Communism uses an authoritative form of government to take away all civil liberties and puts the government in control of the economic market. So while all communists are socialist, not all socialists are communist.

In the United States government, the first widespread socialist policies were introduced by President Roosevelt in 1933. The 1930s were pervaded by the worst economic depression in American history, which began on October 29, 1929, when the stock market crashed. According to the Department of Labor, during the 1930s more than 25% of Americans were unemployed, thousands were homeless, immigration nearly stopped, and dust from the Great Plains destroyed farms and crops. After nearly four years of horrible economic growth, the United States got its first sign of hope in the form of President Roosevelt's New Deal.

This plan oversaw the creation of public works projects, banking reform, and labor regulations that put Americans back to work and protected them from future economic disasters. According to The Living New Deal, during his first 100 days in office Roosevelt continually met with Congress to pass laws that would kickstart the economy. To begin, he declared a bank holiday on March 5, 1933, that lasted for a week. He then passed the Emergency Banking Relief Act that addressed the needs of individual banks. Along with this widespread banking reform, he created programs that supported individual civilians. For example, the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 sent money directly to families, and the Farm Credit Act made it easier for farmers to access credit.

The New Deal also focused on creating new jobs and having safe working and living conditions. The National Industrial Recovery Act, for example, regulated business activities in order to protect the economy and the workers. In addition, it established the Public Works Administration, which gave billions of dollars to create thousands of infrastructure projects across the United States. The New Deal also provided artists with work by establishing initiatives such as the Public Works of Art Project that commissioned artists to create works in public spaces. Additional aspects of the New Deal protected wildlife, provided electricity to rural areas, and revised the standards of labor.

A pin supporting Roosevelt's New Deal.

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey unveil the Green New Deal.

Though the New Deal programs were extremely successful in lowering the unemployment and poverty rates, not everyone supported them. Libertarians, free-market capitalists, and even some members of Congress critiqued the New Deal for promoting socialist ideology. The wealthy felt that it was unfair for Roosevelt to raise taxes on them, while members of Congress felt that these new programs gave the government too much power. They were scared that these socialist programs would eventually lead to a communist takeover in the United States.

Nevertheless, the New Deal programs flourished for the next two decades. By the 1960s the "New Left" emerged, taking an interest not only in labor and economic issues, but also civil rights and environmental issues. New Left activists supported the Civil Rights Act of 1964, protested the war in Vietnam, and advocated against the use of nuclear weapons.

Today, socialism in America is a combination of the "Old Left" of the 1940s and the "New Left" of the 1960s, fighting for economic and social equality as well as climate change. Senator Bernie Sanders (VT), who ran for president in the 2016 and 2020 elections, as well as the US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY) are both members of the Democratic Socialists of America, the largest socialist organization in the United States. In 2018, Ocasio-Cortez proposed a package of legislation with Senator Ed Markey (MA) called the Green New Deal, a ten-year plan that tackles income inequality, standards of living, and climate change.

According to the resolution distributed by Ocasio-Cortez and Markey, the plan would guarantee everyone a job with a sustainable income, paid medical and vacation leave, and retirement. The plan also includes repairing infrastructure, overhauling transportation systems to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gases, and using renewable energy throughout the United States. Finally, the plan would provide high-quality health care, safe housing, economic security, and clean water, air, and food to all.

The Green New Deal has encountered strict opposition from the right, who say the plan is too socialist and controversial; however, it has also been under scrutiny from certain Democrats and scientists as well. Ernest Moniz, President Obama's Secretary of Energy, said in an interview with NPR, "I'm afraid I just cannot see how we could possibly go to zero carbon in the ten-year time frame. It's just impractical." Though how much the Green New Deal will accomplish is disputable, many influential people support it, such as Senators Kamala Harris (CA) and Elizabeth Warren (MA).

Today, there is a stigma around policies that contain any form of socialist ideology. US citizens still overwhelmingly support capitalism rather than socialism or communism. However, socialism in the US is gaining traction with younger voters. According to a poll by NPR, 38% of people 18-38 years old support implementing socialist policies in the United States.

Talley's Folly, WW1, and WW2 A Timeline

By Macey Downs

Sally: If we get through the war, there's time to think about the future.
Matt: Nobody thinks like that anymore. Live for today.
Sally: Everything is upside down.
Matt: No, no. We're not waiting for when Johnny comes marching home this time.

When Matt and Sally reunite on July 4, 1944, they have already lived through one world war, and are currently living through a second one. The lead-up to World War I (WWI), known at the time as the Great War, had uprooted Matt's life and made him both an orphan and an immigrant in America. Now in the middle of World War II (WWII), Matt and Sally do not know what life looks like without war in it. Click here for a timeline of the major events of WWI in Europe and how those led to the start of WWII. How might people living through these times have held onto hope for the future?

Click here for an interactive timeline of the events leading up to Talley's Folly on Prezi.

By July 4, 1944, WWII had been raging for five years, with no end in sight. The war would finally end a year later, but at the time of the play, Matt and Sally don't know this. While the ends of the world wars feel inevitable to us now, for those who lived through one war, and then another, wartime seemed endless. Matt and Sally had not yet lived through a time where the world was not either on the brink of war, fighting in wars, or cleaning up the aftermath of war.

Almost a century later, this is a familiar feeling to members of Generation Z, who are similarly living through a moment in history with endless, worldwide tragedy. The US continues to be engaged in its longest war, the War on Terror, while also facing the brink of the climate crisis that has been looming for decades. Generation Z has been hearing about these crises since elementary school in the early 2000s, and as they reach adulthood there is still no end in sight. The longer these conflicts drag on, the more they become compounded by threats of a third world war, a global pandemic, and the devastating realization that the climate is already changing before our eyes.

In the face of a massive tragedy, where do we reach for hope? Sally is unable to think of a prosperous future while the war still goes on, and instead dedicates her energy to minimizing tragedy as much as she can—by working as a nurse's aide. Matt withdraws himself from participation in the war effort, and refuses to lose more years of his life to brutal political causes. In the face of worldwide tragedy, we can look to both of their strategies as we grasp for hope ourselves. Like Matt, we can still imagine the future we desire into existence, while also following Sally's path and fighting for those who are suffering most.

Glossary

By Meredith G. Healy

Alte moid: Yiddish for a spinster; literally "old maid."

Antisemite: a person who is hostile to or prejudiced against Jewish people.

Bandstand: a covered outdoor platform for a band to play on, typically in a park.

A bandstand on the Eastern Promenade in Portland, ME.

Capricious: given to sudden and unaccountable changes of mood or behavior.

Carburetor: a device in an internal combustion engine for mixing air with a fine spray of liquid fuel. The carburetor is responsible for controlling the engine's speed.

Caviar: the pickled roe, or eggs, of sturgeon or other large fish, eaten as a delicacy.

Chronicle: a work of fiction or nonfiction that describes a particular series of events.

The Cooper Brothers: brothers who played for the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1940s and were on the team for the Cardinals' three consecutive World Series appearances from 1942 through 1944. Mort Cooper (1913-1958) was a pitcher and Walker Cooper (1915-1991) was a catcher.

Dayroom: a room used for daytime recreation, especially a communal room in a hospital.

Folly: a costly ornamental building with no practical purpose, especially a tower or mock-Gothic ruin built in a large garden or park.

Footlights: a row of spotlights along the front of a stage at the level of the actors' feet.

Frivolity: not having any serious purpose or value.

Frou-frou: very showy or fancy.

Full of hot air: someone who talks a lot about topics they don't really understand or don't know.

Geegaw: a showy thing, especially one that is useless or worthless.

Emma Goldman: (1869-1940) a Jewish woman, often described as an anarchist, who dedicated her life to the creation of a radically new social order. Convinced that the political and economic organization of modern society was fundamentally unjust, she embraced anarchism for the vision it offered of liberty, harmony, and true social justice.

Emma Goldman.

Gottenyu: a Yiddish exclamation that is uttered with affection, despair, or irony, to lend force to a sentence by adding fervor to sentiment.

Goyim: Yiddish; the plural version of "goy," a Jewish name for a non-Jew.

Great Depression: the period of severe worldwide economic decline that began in

1929 and lasted throughout the 1930s and that was marked by deflation and widespread unemployment.

Great War: another name for World War I (1914-1918), a war in which the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary, joined later by Turkey and Bulgaria) were defeated by an alliance of Britain and its dominions, France, Russia, and others, joined later by Italy and the US.

Hatfields and McCoys: two American Appalachian mountaineer families who, with their kinfolk and neighbors, engaged in a legendary feud that attracted nationwide attention in the 1880s and 1890s. The feuds resulted in many deaths and kidnappings for both families, and eventually the families were tried by the Supreme Court for their actions.

The Hatfields.

Infidel: a person who does not believe in religion or who adheres to a religion other than one's own; a disbeliever in something specified or understood.

"May I": a children's game similar to "Simon Says" where the caller gives directions and the selected child asks "May I?" before following the direction. The first one to touch the caller wins.

No-holds-barred: an expression derived from boxing and wrestling, which traditionally meant no restrictions on the kinds of holds that were used. Now the expression is used more generally to convey that no rules or restrictions apply in a conflict or dispute.

Plymouth: a make of automobiles produced by the Chrysler Corporation in the United States, known for being lower-cost.

Pockmarked: featuring a mark, pit, or depressed scar caused by smallpox or acne.

Quandary: a state of perplexity or uncertainty over what to do in a difficult situation.

Ratiocination: form judgments by a process of logic; reason.

[A] Screw loose: an expression meaning to be mentally unbalanced.

Secretary of the Interior: the head of the Department of the Interior, which is the government agency responsible for managing public lands and minerals, national parks, and wildlife refuges.

Sen-sen: a type of breath freshener containing licorice, frequently used to disguise the smell of alcohol or cigarettes.

Sephardic: a member of the western branch of European Jews settling in Spain and Portugal and later in the Balkans, the Levant, England, the Netherlands, and the Americas.

Shmeer: a collection of related ideas.

Sideshow: a small show or stall at an exhibition, fair, or circus; famous for featuring oddities like a strong man, a bearded lady, or conjoined twins.

Sitting Bull: (1831-1890) Sioux chief; Sioux name Tatanka Iyotake. He led the Sioux in the fight to retain their lands; this resulted in the massacre of Lt. Col. Custer and his men at Little Bighorn. He was killed by reservation police during the Ghost Dance turmoil.

Sitting Bull

Shiksa: a derogatory Yiddish word for a non-Jewish girl or woman.

Shriners' mosque: the building where Shriners, a charitable society founded in the US in 1872, meet. These buildings were also often used for social gatherings, such as dances.

Shriners on parade.

Sluggard: a lazy, sluggish person.

Sounding board: a person or group whose reactions to suggested ideas are used as a test of their validity or likely success before they are made public.

Spontaneous combustion: the ignition of organic matter (e.g., hay or coal) without apparent cause, typically through heat generated internally by rapid oxidation.

Springfield: a city in southwestern Missouri, on the northern edge of the Ozark Mountains

Status quo: the existing state of affairs, especially regarding social or political issues.

Still: an apparatus for distilling alcoholic drinks such as whiskey.

TB: an abbreviation for tuberculosis, a disease that infects humans and some other vertebrates. The symptoms of tuberculosis are fever, cough, and difficulty in breathing.

Tetanus: an acute infectious bacterial disease characterized by tonic spasm of voluntary muscles especially of the jaw and caused by a bacteria which is usually introduced through a wound.

Trust fund: an estate planning tool that establishes a legal entity, called a trustee, to hold property or assets for a person or organization.

Two-barreled: more often referred to as "double-barreled"; a firearm which has two barrels mounted side by side or one beneath the other.

USO: United Service Organization, the nation's leading charitable organization in serving active-duty service members and military families.

Victorian: a typically large and ornate house built during Queen Victoria's reign. Key architectural elements include: wood or stone exterior; complicated, asymmetrical shape; decorative trim; and vibrant colors.

Vilde chaya: a Yiddish phrase meaning a rambunctious or wild person; literally "wild animal."

Waltz: a dance in triple time performed by a couple, who as a pair turn rhythmically round and round as they progress around the dance floor.

War bond: a debt security issued by a government to finance military operations during times of war or conflict. The public may buy these bonds out of a feeling of patriotic duty, or other emotional appeal.

A War Bond poster.

Whirligig: a toy that spins around; for example, a top or a pinwheel.

Wire crossed: to have a misunderstanding.

St. Louis & the Ozarks

By Macey Downs

In *Talley's Folly*, Matt and Sally take a journey together toward accepting themselves, their complicated pasts, and their rightness for each other. This emotional journey is bookended by two physical journeys—Matt's drive from St. Louis to rural Lebanon, Missouri, and his late night trip with Sally back to the big city. While today a car ride from St. Louis to Lebanon would take around two and a half hours, this journey would have taken Matt around four hours (one way) in 1944, over a decade before Missouri's major highways were built. These Missouri towns seem to be as different as Matt and Sally appear to be from each other. Ideologically, however, St. Louis and Lebanon are more similar than Matt would like to admit.

When Matt leaves St. Louis on his journey to win over Sally, he is leaving behind a crowded city of over 800,000 people. Shortly before the start of World War II, thousands of Black Americans moved to St. Louis during the Great Migration—a nearly 60-year period where Black Americans fled from the highly segregated South. Many people flocked to St. Louis for work, as it was known as the "Industrial City" for its large-scale factories, power plants, breweries, and warehouses. Some of these, built as far back as the late 19th century, still dot the St. Louis landscape today, although many are no longer in use due to America's shift away from local manufacturing.

Portland Stage's costume intern, Mollie Lipkowitz, is from St. Louis, and shared some of her thoughts on the history of the city and how it continues to impact life in Missouri today. She spoke to how the Great Migration and the start of WWII coincided, explaining that "St. Louis feared the end of WWII, because it meant having to integrate men of color and white men that were sent to fight in the war back into St. Louis. The end of the war also meant figuring out what to do with the thousands of Black men and women who had filled wartime production jobs." Even before WWII, this tension existed: in 1917, year-long violent riots broke out in St. Louis when Black workers replaced white workers who were on strike against an industry in East St. Louis. Dozens of Black St. Louis residents were massacred at the hands of white Americans who feared losing their jobs. In reality, thousands of the Black Americans that arrived in St. Louis were unemployed when they found that the jobs they were promised were nonexistent.

Sally's hometown of Lebanon, a town of 5,000 people in the 1940s, appears vastly different from St. Louis's industrial city life. Lebanon is on the edge of the Lake of the Ozarks in central Missouri. Much of this lake was man-made only 15 years before Matt and Sally's reunion, when 30,000 acres of land were cleared and flooded in order to power a hydroelectric dam. The Lake of the Ozarks's main industry has always been tourism, which in its early days mainly consisted of fishing, hunting, and boating. It boasts sandy lakeside beaches, forested hiking trails, and limestone caverns that continue to attract tourists from across the country. Lebanon also has its fair share of industries,

and was self-dubbed the "Aluminum Fishing Boat Capital of the World" due to the many fishing boat factories on its shores.

A family in the Ozarks.

Mollie explained, "The Ozarks has always been a very white region, mostly made up of tourism industries and poor white farmers. The fear that they had about the end of the war was more about how the young white men returning from the warfront were gonna need jobs." While the Ozarks doesn't have the same violent history of Black oppression that St. Louis has, this is likely because Black Americans migrating north weren't welcomed to this very white region in the first place. The influx of tourists into the Ozarks region has historically made locals wary of outsiders and outside ideas. The author Dan William Peek, a local whose family has lived in the Ozarks since the 1940s, described how, even today, "there's still this idea of us and them. The newcomers and the true locals." While the Ozarks is often heralded for its beauty, not everyone has been welcomed to partake in that rural lifestyle.

In *Talley's Folly*, Lebanon is painted as the perfect setting for Matt and Sally's inexplicable, but seemingly fated, love to come together—a peaceful space where wartime, money, gunpowder taxes, and the future seem not to exist, yet still do, hauntingly. However, Matt calls out Sally's family for their narrow views of the world. He describes her family as close-minded and unaccepting of his Jewish identity and socialist ideas. Sally also tells Matt, "I have absolutely got to get out of that place," pointing to how she also cannot be her true self in front of her close-minded family.

Going to St. Louis with Matt is the final ticket out of her small-town life that Sally has been waiting for. However, as Matt alludes to by labeling Missouri as part of the South, St. Louis would continue to oppress and exclude Black community members, while white residents like Matt and Sally could flourish in the seemingly accepting city.

Mollie spoke more to how St. Louis's historical resistance to integration continues to ring true in the city today. She described how "even now, St. Louis is still very segregated. My high school was, effectively, segregated. St. Louis has a really horrible history of redlining [when people of color are prevented from buying property in wealthier, mostly white neighborhoods, based on their race, thereby creating segregated neighborhoods]. There are some streets where, when you look to the left there are like, $1.5 million houses, and when you look to the right, it's like, high-density population. There are maps you can look at of St. Louis's original redlining plan, and still nothing has changed." St. Louis was a beacon of hope for Matt and Sally, but for thousands of Black Americans who called the city home in the 1940s, they were met with perpetual inequality in a city that was supposed to be an escape from the segregated South.

While Matt and Sally end *Talley's Folly* on a hopeful note—that they can finally be their full selves together in the city of St. Louis—many Black families at that time did not have the same luxury of finding peace in the big city. They were instead met with far more enduring oppression and violence than Sally and Matt faced in the small town of Lebanon, and they continue to do so today. It is important to think about which stories get told in theater, which details, individuals, or histories surrounding that story are left out, and consider why that is.

Girls in St. Louis.

1940s in America

by Zach Elton

Women working in traditionally "male" jobs, along with their male overseer.

During Matt's opening monologue in *Talley's Folly*, he tells the audience, "From the chaos of the Great Depression, people found strength in union, believing their time had come. But even as this hope was perceived, once again a dark power rose up from the chaos in another land. Once again this country pitched its resources and industry into battle. Now, after almost three years of war, it has become apparent that the battle is turning. Once again we are told that 'peace and prosperity' are in the air. But in the midst of battle, that 'hope' the people had known has been changed into the enemy. Peace, and—more to the point—prosperity, is our ally now. Once again, we are told the country has been saved by war."

The 1940s were certainly a turbulent time in America. "Peace and prosperity," as Matt says, seemed like a hollow dream; the country and the world were in turmoil. At the beginning of the decade, the United States had just emerged from the worst economic depression in American history, and while unemployment rates were falling and national income was rising, many Americans were still skeptical of what the future would hold.

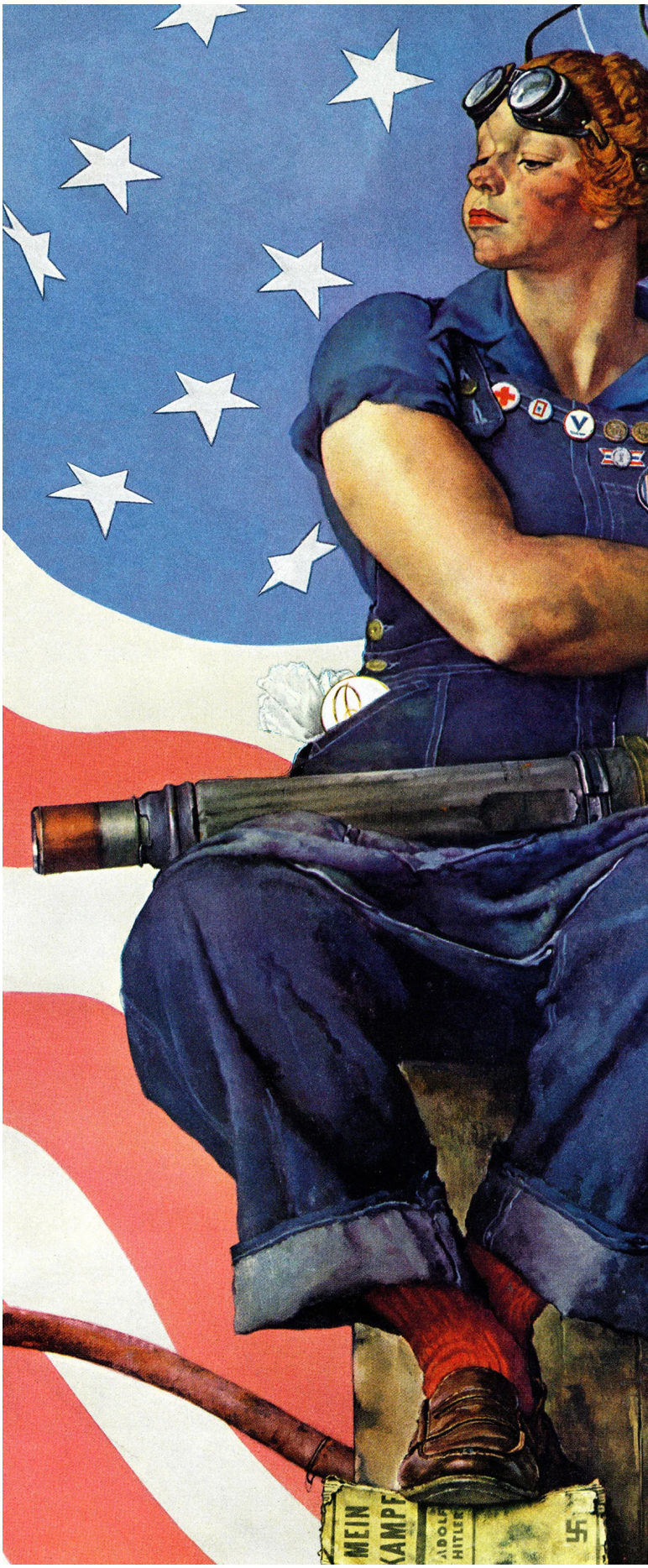
Although World War II had been raging in Europe for nearly two years, President Roosevelt and the American people were reluctant to get involved; the Great Depression had left them in no shape to go to war. However, with Adolf Hitler's aggression in Europe and the United States' allies under attack, it was only a matter of time before the US would be thrown into the chaos of the war. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed the Hawaiian port of Pearl Harbor and, soon after, the USA declared war on Japan and Germany.

With so many men headed overseas, there was a surplus of jobs and not enough men to fill them. These jobs were taken over by women, and their roles in society began to shift drastically. In *What's Right With Feminism: How Feminism has Changed American Society, Culture and How We Live From the 1940's to the Present*, Cassandra Langer says that the second-most influential event for women's rights in the 1900s, after gaining the right to vote, was the bombing of Pearl Harbor. She says that it "...permanently shattered the social fabric of women's lives by shifting their roles decisively." Women not only maintained the house while the men were overseas, but also began doing jobs that were previously held exclusively by men, such as coal mining and factory work. "Suddenly women were a part of the war effort," Langer says, "helping make guns and tanks and fueling the fight for democracy." By the end of the war, women made up around 36% of the labor force. Rosie the Riveter became an iconic symbol of American feminism and a showcase of women's capabilities in factories and in the war effort.

Not everyone, however, was supportive of these shifting gender roles. Despite women––predominantly white women––getting more opportunities in the workplace, there was still a pervasive myth that a woman's primary calling was to be a mother and a housewife. This was especially true for white, working-class women. Women of color had been working in low-income jobs for many years, but even when the men went to fight in the war, many of them did not get better paying jobs. Those positions went to white women. Langer says, "Women experienced a tug of war between old and new roles, traditional and pioneering values." Women were caught between the responsibilities society placed on them to be a housewife and their ambition to work.

Despite this pushback, women were finally breaking into the labor force. By working in the factories, they were helping the United States produce technology and supplies to send overseas. The US was producing ships, tanks, planes, guns, and ammunition at an incredibly fast rate. Between 1939 and 1945, government spending rose 349% for the war effort. One of the biggest technological advancements of the 1940s was the development of the atomic bomb. Since the 1930s, scientists had been working on developing a bomb that used nuclear reactors to detonate. In 1942, President Roosevelt established the Manhattan Project, which gathered some of the best scientists in the world to develop the atomic bomb. The first bomb was tested on July 16, 1945, in the desert of New Mexico, and others were soon dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, essentially ending the war.

The 1940s were a turning point in American history. After just coming out of the Depression, the United States was thrown into the second World War which killed over 300,000 American soldiers. Against the backdrop of the war, women's place in society began to shift drastically. They were breaking into the labor force and doing what they could to support the war effort. These shifting gender roles and the technological advancements in the 1940s altered American society forever.



Judaism in America in the 40s

by Zach Elton

In *Talley's Folly*, Matt has an altercation with Sally's family before the play begins. He recounts the incident to her, saying, "Your brother talks in rhetorical questions: 'You're Sally's Jewish friend, ain't ya? What do you think you want here? Did you ever hear that trespassing was against the law?'" As the play unfolds, we learn that Sally's family is incredibly antisemitic, which is one of the main reasons they don't approve of him.

Though antisemitism in the 1940s is mainly associated with Germany and the Holocaust, there was widespread antisemitism in the United States as well. At the turn of the 20th century, the United States saw an influx of Jewish immigrants who were fleeing from persecution and antisemitism in Eastern and Western Europe. Those lucky enough to arrive in the United States, however, were met with hatred and disdain here as well.

Jewish Refugees aboard the MS St Louis denied entry to the US.

In the years leading up to World War II, there were large Jewish communities in metropolitan areas such as New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia. Most of the people in these communities were first- or second-generation immigrants. Although they tended to lead quiet lives, hatred was never far away. According to a 1938 public opinion poll, up to 60% of respondents had low opinions of Jewish people. Some respondents went on to label them as "greedy," "dishonest," and "pushy."

Prominent US figures openly harassed and slandered Jewish people. Carmaker Henry Ford's newspaper, Dearborn Independent, often contained conspiracy theories about how Jewish people were gaining too much power in the United States. Charles Coughlin, a famous radio preacher, spewed hatred and encouraged far-right groups to take action against Jewish people. Some of Coughlin's followers, who were predominantly Irish-Catholic Americans, formed the Christian Front, a vigilante group that menaced Jewish communities. Though the plan was foiled by the FBI, the Christian Front even attempted to bomb a Jewish newspaper and assassinate Jewish members of Congress.

It wasn't until the election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 that the Jewish people had a powerful ally in the American government. As governor of New York, Roosevelt had publicly denounced antisemitism in 1930 and became the first president to do so as well. There was a large voting bloc of Jewish Americans in New York who were actively being discriminated against, and he promised to fight for them. Roosevelt was one of their biggest supporters and loudest defenders. Jewish people were not allowed in many influential political organizations at the time, so they had to act through second parties such as the American Labor Party, which fought for workers' rights. Once Roosevelt became president, however, he opened government services to Jewish people and had many Jewish advisers in his inner circle. American Jews supported President Roosevelt and his inclusive, socialist policies. For many wealthy conservatives, though, Judaism and Socialism were intrinsically linked and equally despised. Nevertheless, during World War II, President Roosevelt actively condemned antisemitism in the United States. He was quoted as saying any American that condoned or participated in antisemitism was "playing Hitler's game," and that there was no place "in the lives or thoughts of true Americans for antisemitism."

Though Roosevelt was seen as one of the American Jew's strongest allies, he is also considered to be one of the leading causes of the European Jew's demise. Because of the Great Depression, Roosevelt and Congress were

reluctant to take a stand on the war and the persecution of Jewish people in Europe. He even declined to meet with Jewish representatives until right before his second election. When Jewish refugees were fleeing persecution in Germany in the 1930s, Roosevelt did not fight Congress to loosen immigration laws. Instead, he turned the refugees around and sent many of them to their deaths in Hitler's concentration camps. Though he eventually established the War Refugee Board in 1943 to help rescue surviving Jewish people in Europe, many saw this action as coming too late; after all, the concentration camps had been open for nearly a decade by then. It wasn't until after the war and the horrors of the Holocaust were revealed to the public that opinions of Jewish people started changing.

America is often painted as a safe space for refugees. It is seen as a place free from religious persecution and violence, but that is not true. The United States has a deep history of antisemitism, and though that history is often forgotten, it still shapes our society today. In the years that followed World War II, though antisemitism was still active in some areas of the United States, the majority of Americans became more accepting of Jewish people.

Breaking the Fourth Wall:
A Theatrical History of Direct Address

By Macey Downs

"They tell me we have ninety-seven minutes here tonight—without intermission. So if that means anything to anybody; if you need a drink of water or anything..." This is how the character Matt begins *Talley's Folly*—by abruptly announcing to the audience that he, too, is aware that they are watching him in a play. From the moment *Talley's Folly* starts, the audience isn't given the space to pretend they are a fly on the wall watching true events unfold between two people.

Even before Matt walks onstage, Lanford Wilson has specified in stage directions that the stage is "seen in a blank white work light: the artificiality of the theatrical set is quite apparent. The houselights are up." Right away, this is not a traditional theater setting—with a set built realistically as possible, with an audience sitting in the dark so that all lights and focus are on the stage, with the actors pretending as though they don't notice the audience members laughing at their jokes. However, this now familiar, seemingly traditional theater setting only came to be within the last few hundred years with the popularization of the "fourth wall"––the idea that there is an invisible wall at the edge of the stage that the audience can see into but actors cannot see out of.

Building a Fourth Wall

While Matt breaks through this fourth wall with his opening monologue, up until the 19th century there often was no fourth wall to break. Plays where characters would ignore the audience completely were not common until Western European countries like England and France started striving for extreme naturalism within their plays. Theater-makers in Western Europe at this time believed that the most successful plays had characters that mimicked human behavior as closely as possible, and scenery that looked as realistic as possible. They began to move away from the two-dimensional painted backdrops that had been previously used in European theater, and instead shifted to real decor and furniture pieces, often taken from cast and crew members' houses.

Striving for honesty in plays has now become inseparable from the illusion of reality. To make dialogue, sets, and costumes appear as though they were pulled directly from our world, theater-makers attempt to hide as many of the theatrical mechanics from the audience as possible—lights, costume changes, set changes behind a closed curtain, etc. However, before this shift toward extreme naturalism, the audience was often just as much a character in the play as the actors onstage.

The Greek Chorus
As far back as the 6th century BCE, ancient Greek theater began to take form out of rituals that took place at religious festivals. Ancient Greek theater asked its audiences to use their imaginations, oftentimes having one actor play multiple characters that they would symbolically switch between by wearing different, expressive masks. A Greek chorus was established to help guide audience members through the play. The chorus would directly address the audience about the main action of the play through song, recitation, and dance. By establishing this connection with the audience, the chorus acted as an ideal spectator for the audience to mirror. They would react to the events of the play the way in which the audience was supposed to react, and often made moral judgments on the rest of the characters' actions for the audience to consider.

A roman mosaic of Tragedy and Comedy masks.

American Indigenous Storytelling
Across the ocean in North America, Indigenous ritual, performance, and storytelling traditions were established that continue to be major methods of community building among American Indigenous people today. While there aren't records that tell us how far American Indigenous storytelling practices go back, they could stretch as far as 12,000 years ago when the First Peoples migrated to North America.

Indigenous storytelling aims to bring listeners together for meaningful engagement with a subject, so that when they walk away the lessons and histories stay with them. As described by the writer Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, storytelling in Indigenous communities encourages people to "live storied lives." Elders would perform and share stories with younger generations as a way to preserve their tribe's history, teach lessons, communicate survival methods, or explain how parts of our world came to be. These traditions endure in Indigenous communities as an act of resistance to colonization, to revitalize Indigenous culture and language, and to celebrate Indigenous people's resiliency.

Shakespeare's Soliloquies
Another key figure in the history of direct address is William Shakespeare, whose plays were originally performed at the Globe Theatre in the early 17th century. Shakespeare's plays often include soliloquies, monologues that feature a character alone onstage sharing their private thoughts with the audience. His plays also frequently have asides, which are when a character speaks directly to the audience during a scene to comment on what is happening onstage.

The Globe Theatre made no attempt to hide the theatricality of Shakespeare's plays. It had a thrust stage that was surrounded by audience members on three sides, and had no large pieces of scenery to hide actors behind. Shakespeare used direct address to build a rapport between a character and the audience, and get audience members to empathize with that character. This helped guide the emotional journey of audience members and caused them to invest in the often tragic outcome of the plays.

Brecht and Alienation
Centuries after Shakespeare's death, German playwright Bertolt Brecht turned to direct address as a way of doing the opposite of instilling empathy in an audience. Having survived through the rise and fall of Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, Brecht's plays aimed to inspire the audience to action and reject the passivity that paved way for the Holocaust to happen. Brecht wanted to rid the theater of illusions. He pioneered an acting technique called "alienation" that encouraged actors to speak directly to the audience and remain detached from the character they were playing. By having actors refrain from enforcing their judgments or empathy onto a character, they invited the audience to cast their own judgments upon the character.

Wabanaki performers.

Brecht also believed in the importance of reminding audience members that they were in a theater. He believed that doing so would be like holding something up to the light and making the audience look again, more carefully this time. He called for sets to show the theatrical machinery, like the lights or the ropes hanging set pieces. Brecht treated his audiences as intelligent individuals who could carry a play's messages out into their daily lives.

Breaking the Fourth Wall & Oppression

In theater today, breaking the fourth wall and directly addressing the audience is being used more to get audience members to consider their privileges and identities. The 2018 play Fairview by Jackie Sibblies Drury uses direct address to break down the white gaze of American theater. American theater audiences are disproportionately made up of upper middle class white people, and even shows that are by and for people of color are asked to be palatable to majority-white audiences. Drury ends her play, which addresses the ways white people claim, criticize, and co-opt Black stories, with a character directly addressing the audience. Drury then takes breaking the wall between the audience and performers a step further, by having this character ask all audience members who identify as white to come onstage, so that she can come into the audience and speak directly to any audience members who identify as people of color.

How does *Talley's Folly* fit into this history? Understanding some historical and modern roots of direct address provides us with tools to consider what Matt's opening monologue to the audience in *Talley's Folly* is doing. By thinking of Matt as the story's Greek chorus, he is meant to guide the audience down the correct moral path of the play. This also reflects the goals of Shakespearean soliloquies—by speaking to the audience directly and building a rapport with them, Matt is getting the audience to root for him. From the beginning, the audience would hope for Sally to submit to Matt's persistence, and feel frustrated by her reluctance.

However, following a Brechtian perspective, Matt's bold reveal that we are watching a play, that there is a set and lighting, and that the audience is sitting where the river would be would instead put the audience on guard. Matt is encouraging them to approach the play intellectually and skeptically at first, before they become swept up in the charm of the story. This places the audience on a similar journey as Sally, who is guarded against Matt from the start, but is eventually won over by his history and their seemingly fated love. In accordance with Indigenous practices of storytelling, the audience's awareness that they are watching this story unfold before their eyes has the effect of encouraging each audience member to lead storied lives. They leave the theater and recognize the magic and power of their own stories, just as Matt and Sally choose to shape their own narratives in the face of a war-torn world. This would help pave the way for later works like Fairview to revolutionize direct address as a tool to help change the social landscape of theater.

MaYaa Boateng in Soho Rep's production of Fairview.

Recommended Resources

By The Editors

Books:
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
FDR and the Jews by Richard Breitman
What's Right With Feminism: How Feminism has Changed American Society, Culture and How We Live From the 1940's to the Present by Cassandra Langer
The Griffin and Sabine Trilogy by Nick Bantock

Plays:
To Let Go and Fall by Harrison David Rivers
Being Norwegian by David Greig
The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
Our Town by Thornton Wilder
Sanctuary City by Martyna Majok

Works by Lanford Wilson:
Fifth of July
Talley & Son
Burn This

TV/Film:
Meet Me in St. Louis
A League of Their Own

The cast of A league of their Own.

Portland Stage Company
Education and Outreach

Join Portland Stage as we discuss, debate, and explore the plays on our stage and in the classroom! Portland Stage is dedicated to bringing exciting theater, inspiring conversation, interactive experiences, and thought-provoking literature to a wide audience of youth and adult learners. Whether you take part in a discussion, subscribe to PlayNotes, take a class in our Theater for Kids space, or bring a group of students to see a performance, there is something here for everyone. How would you like to participate?

Student Matinee Series
The Portland Stage Student Matinee Program annually provides more than 7,000 middle and high school students from Maine and New Hampshire with discounted tickets for student matinees. This season, we are offering this program digitally. Portland Stage can send you the video in a way that works best for your group. We would be happy to do a workshop with you too!

Play Me a Story
Experience the Fun & Magic of Theater on Saturday Mornings at 10:30am with Play Me a Stor: in your living room! All ages can enjoy a free performance of children's stories on Facebook live. Ages 4-10 are welcome to participate in an interactive workshop over zoom for $5. Build literacy, encourage creativity and spark dramatic dreams!

After School Classes
After school classes at Portland Stage produce a safe environment for young people to find a higher sense of play, stretch their imaginations, and gain valuable social skills such as listening, risk-taking, ensemble building, public speaking, and leadership through storytelling. These classes are wildly fun, creative, spontaneous, and begin to build skills for the young actor or non-actor's voice, body, and imagination. Visit our website for this year's offerings!

Vacation and Summer Camps
Our theater camps are fun, challenging, and enriching. We use stories of all kinds to fuel these active, educational and lively, process-based week-long school vacation and summer programs for youth. Theater for Kids works with professional actors, directors, artisans, and composers. Students are invited to think, speak, and act, and even sing imaginatively, critically, and creatively in an environment of inclusivity and safe play.

Virtual Portland Stage PLAY
An interactive dramatic reading and acting workshop for elementary school students in grades K – 5. Professional teaching artists perform children's literature and classic poetry for the entire school, and then work with select classrooms in workshops based on the stories. Actors actively engage students in small groups/workshops using their bodies, voices, and imaginations to build understanding of the text while bringing the stories and characters to life. PLAY helps develop literacy and reading fluency, character recall, understanding of themes, social emotional skills, physical storytelling, and vocal characterization. The program also comes with a comprehensive Resource Guide filled with information and activities based on the books and poems.

Virtual Directors Lab
Schools get access to a 50 minute filmed production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* performed by professional actors/teaching artists. After the performance, students engage directly with the text in an interactive virtual workshop with the actors and creative team. In these workshops, students practice effective communication, creative collaboration, rhetoric, and critical analysis. The program also comes with a comprehensive Resource Guide filled with information and resources about the play we are focusing on. Directors Lab puts Shakespeare's language into the hands and mouths of the students, empowering them to be the artists, directors, and ensemble with the power to interpret the text and produce meaning.

Portland Stage Company 2020–2021 Staff

Anita Stewart *Executive & Artistic Director*

Artistic & Production Staff

Meg Anderson *Props Master*
Todd Brian Backus *Literary Manager*
Daniel Brodhead *Production Manager, Lighting & Sound Supervisor*
Hannah Cordes *Education Director*
Doane Dorchester *General Manager*
Ted Gallant *Technical Director*
Myles C. Hatch *Stage Manager*
Julianne Shea *Education Administrator*
Susan Thomas *Costume Shop Manager*

Affiliate Artists

Ron Botting
Peter Brown
Daniel Burson
Maureen Butler
Ian Carlsen
Hannah Cordes
Moira Driscoll
Abigail Killeen
Callie Kimball
Daniel Noel
Ed Reichert
Hans Indigo Spencer
Dustin Tucker
Bess Welden
Monica Wood
Sally Wood

Administrative Staff

Paul Ainsworth *Business Manager*
Cody Brackett *Marketing Associate*
Chris DeFilipp *House Manager*
Nolan Ellsworth *Front of House Associate*
Marjorie Gallant *Graphic Design Associate*
Beth Given *Development Director*
Mical Hutson *Marketing Director*
Jennifer London *Company Manager*
Martin Lodish *Finance Director*
Renee Myhaver *Assistant Box Office Manager*
Donald Smith *Audience Services Manager*
Madeline St. Germain *Front of House Associate*
Lauren Stockless *Development Assistant*
Nathan Sylvester *Front of House Associate*
Adam Thibodeau *House Manager*
Shannon Wade *Front of House Associate*

Intern Company

Sophia B. Diaz *Education*
Macey Downs *Directing & Dramaturgy*
Zach Elton *Directing & Dramaturgy*
Whitney Edmonds *Costumes*
Meredith G. Healy *Directing & Dramaturgy*
Audrey Kastner *Electrics*
Beth Koehler *Stage Management*
Mollie Lipkowitz *Costumes*
Lizzie Lotterer *Company Management*
Courtney Prentiss *Stage Management*
Jordan Wells *Education*