

# Author's Statement

*Glory Glory* opens in 1909 as Mrs. Julia Ward Howe is about to deliver a lecture at the Providence Athenaeum about her memories of the American Civil War and how she came to write “The Battle Hymn.” Her audience includes the other characters, who interrupt, introduce themselves, and argue for their points of view.

Most of the other characters — the Black Man, the Irishman, the Industrialist, the Confederate Woman, and Mrs. Howe (a White, Northern, liberal) — represent interest groups of that time. They address each other directly, but they also speak through the newspapers they read and the churches they attend. For these I have a Newspaperman and a ministerial Religious Voice. People also express their points of view through the songs they sing.

Mrs. Howe is the only character who has a personal name. She stands outside the time of the conflict, so she can look back and evaluate what happened and her role in it. In *Glory Glory* I am asking an audience to consider that a social upheaval such as a civil war is caused less by the decisions of a few leaders than by changes in a social order, an economy, and a balance (or imbalance) of power.

At the end of the play the Newspaperman asks each of the characters why they supported the war. Julia then realizes that “glory” has lost its meaning. I want *Glory Glory* to provoke thought about why we go to war, and I hope that the conversations, in words that were actually used, will remind us that we cannot count on people to think fairly or logically. If people like us could rationalize slavery, what can't we rationalize? What do we rationalize now?