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## **Susan Glaspell's Alison's House: Research Challenges and Issues**

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**SUSAN GLASPELL'S ALISON'S HOUSE:  
RESEARCH CHALLENGES AND ISSUES**

Theatre History II and Sara Freeman\*  
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Susan Glaspell's last, Pulitzer-prize winning play *Alison's House* seems initially to be "the Emily Dickinson play" with its absent title character inspired, as it partly is, by the "myth of Amherst." But researching the play for production requires moving beyond the textual/biographical connection and considering historical, sociological, and emotional factors that make this play a forgotten example of classic American realism on par with the work of Eugene O'Neill. Four examples of research projects undertaken in the spring 2006 Theatre History II class about *Alison's House* will be presented, with topics concerning actress Eva La Gallienne and her Civic Repertory Company, which staged the first production of *Alison's House*, the work of the Provincetown Players, Eugene O'Neill and other writers who were Glaspell's contemporaries, the roles and expectations for 19th century women that shape the attitudes represented in this play, and the historical moment of the turn-of-the century when the play is set.