

Trail of Tears

A play in two acts by

Joseph Hullett

Past, present, and future entwine as Alfred Barth, an esteemed Professor of Modern History, probes the Trail of Tears through the story of Widow Nancy Still, an 1838 Cherokee farm-woman forced onto a winter death-march where 5000 perished.

From the safety of his academician's study, Barth witnesses in imagination Nancy's tragedy unfold. Sensing some profound warning in her fate, he becomes obsessed with completing Nancy's story as his 9th and most important book. His obsession, however, drives him to neglect his cherished daughter, Tamara, his wife, his university responsibilities, and a rising right-wing political tide. When that tide engulfs the Chairmen of the History Department, Barth, hitherto invincible, stands to defend his mentor. Too late, however, he finds himself politically out of favor and staggered with charges of malfeasance over which he must make a terrible choice.

Years later, his beloved daughter, unable to forgive that choice, discovers Barth's final, horrendous secret.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

***NOTE:** Actors are double cast as an integral part of the play structure*

PROFESSOR BARTH PROFESSOR BENSON	Professor of Modern History at the University a visiting junior scholar on sabbatical
NANCY STILL	A Cherokee mother
VERA BARTH TAMARA BARTH	Barth's wife Barth's elderly daughter
PROFESSOR LEVI BOONE DAVIS:	Chairman of the History Department a Georgia farmer
RICHARD KANIN SERGEANT RUTLEDGE:	Assistant Professor of History an Army Regular
JUDGE WARREN DR. VOLLNER CHANCELLOR SPERRY:	Georgia State Court Judge An anatomist and acting University Chancellor recently appointed University Chancellor and Benson's employer
JOSEPH CLOUD POLICEMAN:	A Cherokee scout a plainclothes policeman

Staging Notes: Originally the play was successfully produced in a fluid, non-traditional manner on a small, single-set stage.