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OLIVER SACKS

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For immediate release

As *Awakenings* author Oliver Sacks releases his latest book, *Hallucinations*, this month, discover more about the man and his ground-breaking work as he shares personal memories about his life with Web of Stories.

Born in England in 1933, Oliver Sacks moved to America after graduating from Oxford University with a medical degree. There he worked as a consultant neurologist where his experiences with patients and his life-changing treatment led him to write his 1973 book, the critically acclaimed *Awakenings*, which was later made into a film starring Robin Williams.

In his 1985 bestseller, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, he describes a number of neurological disorders. These publications, together with his later works, have brought world-wide recognition.

In this series of amusing and insightful clips, Sacks shares his childhood memories of growing up in a family of physicians; an upbringing which helped shape his fascination with medicine: *'Table conversation was all about medicine... My mother, in particular, was a very good storyteller and loved telling medical stories, either impervious to the gruesome and to the shocked effect of listeners. I think I was both fascinated and horrified by many of these medical stories.'*

He recounts precious memories of how W H Auden bolstered his confidence and came to be his mentor: *'I gave him the manuscript of Awakenings and he called it a*

masterpiece. And he didn't use words lightly and... I'd never had anything like that said to me in my life.'

These remarkable clips of Sacks also include his memories of his ground-breaking work with patients which led him to write *Awakenings*: *'I gave L-DOPA in March of '69 to three patients, and a placebo to three other patients. It was evident that the placebo was doing nothing, but the L-DOPA was doing everything. These were people who had been almost inanimate for 30 or 40 years, who had burst into explosive life... I kept very detailed notes and journals, and some of the patients did. I also at that time started... carrying around a camera because I thought these are things which have never been seen before, and may never be seen again...'*

You can hear more about Sacks's fascinating life and work by watching this series of captivating recordings. They are available to view, free of charge, as a number of short clips, with a fully searchable transcript. All Web of Stories videos are easy to share with friends and colleagues, and may be embedded into personal blogs and websites.

Find out more:
<http://www.webofstories.com/people/oliver.sacks/1>

NOTES FOR EDITORS ABOUT WEB OF STORIES

Everyone has a story to tell. Over time many stories become forgotten, but now Web of Stories offers members of the public the chance to tell their stories for future generations to enjoy. The project is built on the belief that we all have wonderful stories to share, and have family and friends whose tales we would like to hear.

Web of Stories began as an archive of life stories told by some of the great scientists, writers and artists of our time. As the number of stories grew, it became obvious that some were on related topics and that a web was slowly being created of connected stories.

We welcome anyone to come and talk about virtually anything they like. Just like our famous speakers, we hope you will record your stories for others to enjoy.

CONTACT

For more information on Web of Stories or any of our videos please contact the Press Desk on +44(0)20 7323 0323 or press@webofstories.com

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