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JOHN WHEELER

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For immediate release

Friday 13 April marks the fourth anniversary of the death of John Wheeler, one of the world's most influential physicists. Web of Stories was fortunate enough to capture Wheeler discussing his work in his own words and these fascinating clips can be seen on our website

John Wheeler was an American theoretical physicist who was largely responsible for reviving interest in general relativity in the United States after World War II. Despite his work with Niels Bohr in explaining the basic principles behind nuclear fission, Wheeler is best known for coining the term 'black holes' as well as for his mind-stretching theories and writings on time, space and gravity. For most of his career, Wheeler was a professor at Princeton University and was influential in mentoring a generation of physicists who made notable contributions to quantum mechanics and gravitation.

In this series of insightful recordings, Wheeler recounts his career-long fascination with quantum and relativity and his work on the H-bomb: *'I had somehow the idea that the H-bomb was conceptually as clear as the A-bomb. That is, all you needed to do was bring some material together and it would go off. Well, it was nowhere near as simple as that.'*

He shares his thoughts on working with both Einstein and Richard Feynman: *'To me it's the height of the ideal of science, two people considering a*

problem as carefully as they can, they come out with opposite views, but they write down what they agree on, what they disagree on, and what should be done to settle the disagreement.'

The recordings would not be complete without watching Wheeler discuss his ground-breaking work on black holes: *'I would put the question in its largest form this way: how come existence? How come that there is anything at all? And the black hole is a standing invitation to consider that issue, because you get something going to nothing, well, then, how do you get out of nothing, something? How do you turn it around?'*

All of Wheeler's fascinating recordings can be watched as a number of short clips ranging in length between one and several minutes, 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/james.watson/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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