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PHILIP ROTH

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For immediate release

Web of Stories is delighted to release several brand new recordings with award-winning American writer, Philip Roth as he recounts, with light-hearted honesty, elements of his life, including the inspiration for some of his work

Born in March 1933 in America, Roth is one of the world's most prolific writers, both celebrated and controversial. He's best known for his 1969 novel *Portnoy's Complaint* and for his late-1990s trilogy comprising the Pulitzer Prize-winning *American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998) and *The Human Stain* (2000). His popularity stems from the frank explorations of Jewish-American life he portrays in his novels, combining a strong autobiographical element with social commentary and political satire.

Often dividing critics with his frequently explicit accounts of his male protagonists' sexual doings, Roth has been one of the most honoured authors of his generation, having received a great many prestigious literary awards which include a Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1997, and the Man Booker International Prize in 2011.

In these newly released clips, Roth provides a fascinating insight into many elements of his life, from his childhood experience of death, to his research methods and writing approach: *'You have to tolerate failure and frustration because many, many days there's nothing or there's half a*

page...I try not to rush and I try to be content with very little.'

He reminisces about spending his youth trying to establish an identity as both a Jew and an American: *'The Jews were the Americans I knew best. But I never felt for a second – despite the fact that I knew there were enemies out there, real enemies and in America – that I wasn't an American. That was always, I think... maybe my strongest identity, my most powerful identity, and I wanted to be an American.'*

Roth also opens up about his decision to write so explicitly about sex in his materials: *'Some of the happiest and most intense moments of my life are associated with sex or sex play, serious sexual activity. So I have had reason to think about it. And thought early on, I guess, why shouldn't it be in literature, in fiction, in a novel?'*

This insightful new footage of Roth, alongside his existing recordings, can be watched 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.

<http://www.webofstories.com/people/philip.roth/23>

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

Should you wish to refer to Web of Stories and our video interviews please ensure that a link to Web of Stories is clearly viewable on your site.