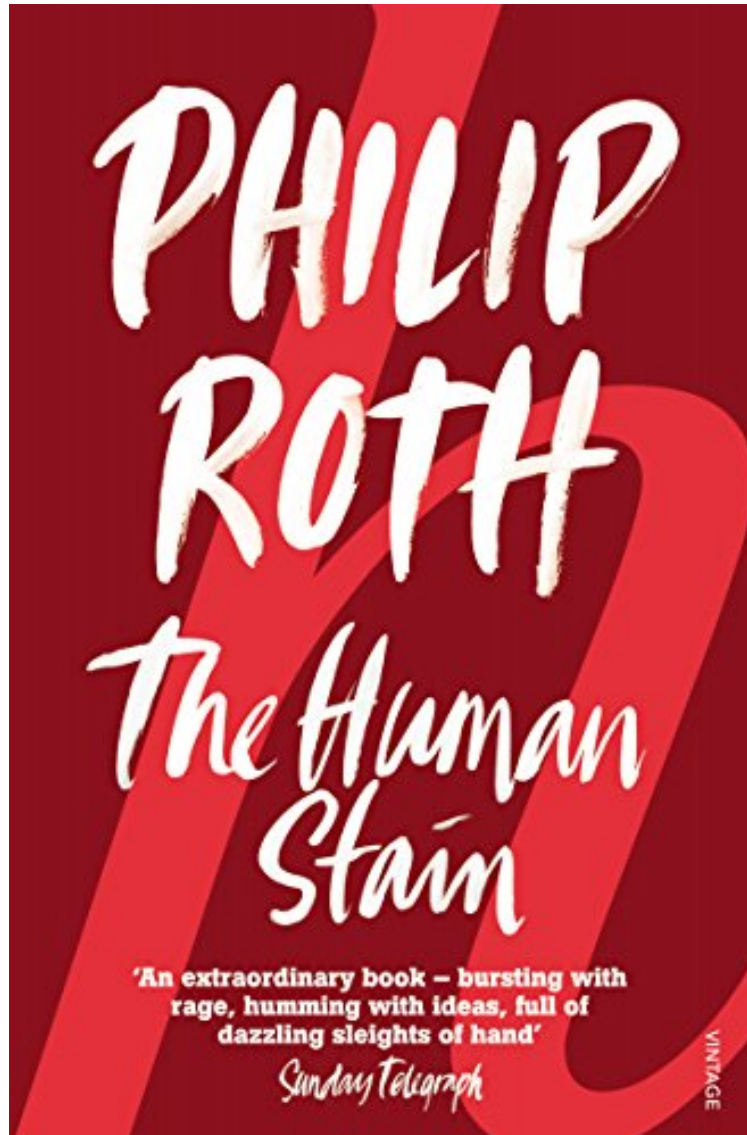


(Ebook free) The Human Stain

The Human Stain

Von Philip Roth

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Von Philip Roth : The Human Stain before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Human Stain:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen8 von 8 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A disappointing end to a trilogy.Von Daniel SonenbergPhilip Roth's Human Stain shocked me, not with its subject-matter, which I think is by now well known, but by its often amateurish construction. If I didn't know the author's name, I would think I was reading a first novel, one that showed promise but whose author clearly needed time to

grow. The characters in this book feel more like ideas than humans. We are told by the author, or rather the narrator, Nathan Zuckerman, what they are like rather than being shown. They carry none of the intense aura of flesh and blood that such recent Roth creations as Merry Levov and Mickey Sabbath did. His main villains are, in fact, nearly ludicrous caricatures: an angry Vietnam veteran suffering from PTSD, and an angry, lonely, 29-year-old female professor of French. While the plot is quite interesting, I never felt any kinship with any of the actors in the drama, and thus found it a struggle to continue reading at times. Roth, of course, can still weave together lyrical, beautiful paragraphs, but in this particular case I often found myself wondering to what end. This is surprising to me, particularly as I count Roth among my favorite authors, and consider his work of the nineties to be by and large brilliant. I particularly loved *American Pastoral*, *Operation Shylock*, and *Patrimony*, and also had a warm spot for Sabbath's *Theater*. *I Married A Communist* seemed a drop-off to me, but nowhere nearly as distressing as that of the *Human Stain*. Here's hoping a better novel comes out in 2001.

7 von 7 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not Roth's Best -- But Still Better Than Most Others Von David J. Hart The *Human Stain* is better than 98% of the dreck that gets published these days, but since I believe that Roth is the greatest American writer, ever, this book gets judged against his other works -- thus only four stars. Roth seems to have begun with a notebook of thoughts and observations, turned them into brilliant prose, and then constructed a plot and characterizations around that prose. The result is a dozen or so interesting but thinly developed characters, including even Coleman Silk, the main protagonist. After all, 360 pages is hardly enough to develop this many characters. The book also purports to be a commentary on the issues of race and political correctness in the late 90s. God knows we don't need another OJ book, but how can you comment on race in the 90s without mentioning OJ? Further, the book is set with the Clinton/Lewinsky matter in the background, but apart from four or five pages of an overheard dialogue and a few other observations sprinkled here and there (including the dead-on observation that Monica and her generation are so proud of their shallowness), the book leaves it alone. Although Zuckerman isn't the lout that Rabbit Angstrom was, I would have appreciated Rabbit's take on the state of the union in 2000. I was hoping that Zuckerman could have filled the void left by Rabbit's death, but it was not to be. Read this book anyway!

7 von 7 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Secrets and lies in the search for self Von Ein Kunde The *Human Stain* is not the best of recent Roth (but then there are few contemporary novels from whatever country as impressive as Sabbath's *Theater* or *American Pastoral*). However, it is confirmation that Roth is one of the most necessary of contemporary writers. This concludes a trilogy of loosely related novels taking a personal examination of important events from post WWII American history. Each is narrated by Nathan Zuckerman (Roth's alter ego), and again Zuckerman is present, but - generally - not intrusive. Set against the backdrop of the Lewinsky affair, Coleman's own fall from his position as Professor of Classics and dean of a department for a "racist" remark is a tragedy, and filled with anger, on behalf of his friend, Zuckerman traces Silk's life, and his final days (including an affair with a cleaner at the University). Roth's writing has a passion. His prose may not be smooth and elegant, but there is real emotion underpinning it. Anger at the nature of modern society, the dumbing down, the compartmentalising of people. Roth's characters are more rounded than in the first Zuckerman trilogy. His subjects now seem real. His writing about a writer, and his problems writing seems to be behind him. This is a book about learning, about ignorance, about dignity, about shame. It can be contrasted with the cool prose of JM Coetzee's *Disgrace*, winner of the Booker Prize in the UK. This novel looks at the fall of an academic after an affair with a student. It is a well written but cold novel. No-one can accuse Roth/Zuckerman of writing cold fiction. The novel is uneven, but there is much that is poetic in the midst of the righteous anger. Also, in *Les Farley*, and *Ernestine Silk* Roth has created two of his most memorable characters. Many years ago Roth wrote a hilarious baseball novel, *The Great American Novel*. Roth's recent work (beginning *I feel with Deception*) has been of an extremely high quality. And it is with this body of work, rather than in that thirty year old fiction, that Roth has finally caught that mythical beast. The cumulative work of the new Zuckerman trilogy and Sabbath's *Theater* truly are Great American Novels.

Kurzbeschreibung 'The work of a genius at full throttle' Sunday Telegraph It is 1998, the year America is plunged into a frenzy of prurience by the impeachment of a president, and in a small New England town a distinguished classics professor, Coleman Silk, is forced to retire when his colleagues allege that he is a racist. The charge is unfounded, the persecution needless, but the truth about Silk would astonish even his most virulent accuser. Coleman Silk has a secret, one which has been kept for fifty years from his wife, his four children, his colleagues, and his friends, including the writer Nathan Zuckerman. It is Zuckerman who comes upon Silk's secret, and sets out to unearth his former buried life, piecing the biographical fragments back together. This is against backdrop of seismic shifts in American history, which take on real, human urgency as Zuckerman discovers more and more about Silk's past and his futile search for renewal and regeneration.

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Delphine Roux, and pissed off so many people for so many decades that now, in 1998, they've all turned on him. Silk's character assassination is partly owing to what the novel's narrator, Nathan Zuckerman, calls "the Devil of the Little Place--the gossip, the jealousy, the acrimony, the boredom, the lies." But shocking, intensely dramatized events precipitate Silk's crisis. He remarks of two students who never showed up for class, "Do they exist or are they spooks?" They turn out to be black, and lodge a bogus charge of racism exploited by his enemies. Then, at 71, Viagra catapults Silk into "the perpetual state of emergency that is sexual intoxication," and he ignites an affair with an illiterate janitor, Faunia Farley, 34. She's got a sharp sensibility, "the laugh of a barmaid who keeps a baseball bat at her feet in case of trouble," and a melancholy voluptuousness. "I'm back in the tornado," Silk exults. His campus persecutors burn him for it--and his main betrayer is Delphine Roux. In a short space, it's tough to convey the gale-force quality of Silk's rants, or the odd effect of Zuckerman's narration, alternately retrospective and torrentially in the moment. The flashbacks to Silk's youth in New Jersey are just as important as his turbulent forced retirement, because it turns out that for his entire adult life, Silk has been covering up the fact that he is a black man. (If this seems implausible, consider that the famous New York Times book critic Anatole Broyard did the same thing.) Young Silk rejects both the racism that bars him from Woolworth's counter and the Negro solidarity of Howard University. "Neither the they of Woolworth's nor the we of Howard" is for Coleman Silk. "Instead the raw I with all its agility. Self-discovery--that was the punch to the labonz.... Self-knowledge but concealed. What is as powerful as that?" Silk's contradictions power a great Philip Roth novel, but he's not the only character who packs a punch. Faunia, brutally abused by her Vietnam vet husband (a sketchy guy who seems to have wandered in from a lesser Russell Banks novel), scarred by the death of her kids, is one of Roth's best female characters ever. The self-serving Delphine Roux is intriguingly (and convincingly) nutty, and any number of minor characters pop in, mouth off, kick ass, and vanish, leaving a vivid sense of human passion and perversity behind. You might call it a stain. --Tim Appelo.co.uk

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