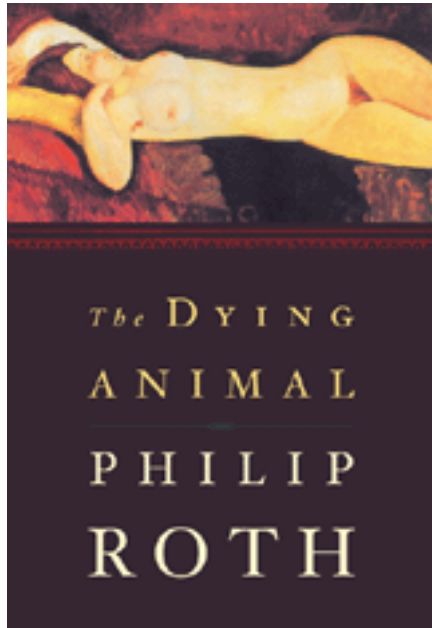


## Press Release

# The Dying Animal

by Philip Roth

- About the Author, Philip Roth



**Decades after the 1960s sexual revolution, one man remains determined to live a life of emancipated manhood.**

---

As David Kepesh, the narrator of Philip Roth's *THE DYING ANIMAL*, candidly states—and he states everything candidly—his main concern is "how to be serious over a lifetime about one's modest, private pleasures." It's a subject much more far-reaching than it might appear, for in asserting his claim to pleasure he must defy the institutions of family and marriage and conventional notions of love. The potential rewards are also great: freedom to live life on one's own terms—and, as Kepesh reminds us, "Sex isn't just friction and shallow fun. Sex is also the revenge on death." But death casts its shadow even in the most unexpected places, and it may coax Kepesh out of a life of nonattachment, for a girl for whom he feels something dangerously close to love.

Kepesh is white-haired and over sixty, an eminent TV culture critic and star lecturer at a New York college, when he meets Consuela Castillo, a decorous, well-mannered student of twenty-four, the daughter of wealthy Cuban exiles, who promptly puts his life into erotic disorder.

Since the sexual revolution of the 1960s freed him from his wife and child, Kepesh has experimented with living what he calls an "emancipated

manhood," beyond the reach of family or a mate. Over the years he has refined that exuberant decade of protest and license into an orderly life in which he is both unimpeded in the world of eros and studiously devoted to his aesthetic pursuits. But the youth and beauty of Consuela, a "masterpiece of *volupté*," undo him completely, and a maddening sexual possessiveness transports him to the depths of deforming jealousy. The carefree erotic adventure evolves, over eight years, into a story of grim loss.

What is astonishing is how much of America's post-sixties sexual landscape is encompassed in *The Dying Animal*. Once again, with unmatched facility, Philip Roth entangles the fate of his characters with the social forces that shape our daily lives. And there is no character who can tell us more about the way we live with desire now than David Kepesh, whose previous incarnations as a sexual being were chronicled by Roth in *The Breast* and *The Professor of Desire*.

A work of passionate immediacy as well as a striking exploration of attachment and freedom, *The Dying Animal* is intellectually bold, forcefully candid, wholly of our time, and utterly without precedent—a story of sexual discovery told about himself by a man of seventy, a story about the power of eros and the fact of death.

## About the Author, Philip Roth

---

In the 1990s Philip Roth won America's four major literary awards in succession: the National Book Critics Circle Award for *Patrimony* (1991), the PEN/Faulkner Award for *Operation Shylock* (1993), the National Book Award for *Sabbath's Theater* (1995), and the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for *American Pastoral* (1997). He won the Ambassador Book Award of the English-Speaking Union for *I Married a Communist* (1998); in the same year he received the National Medal of Arts at the White House. Previously he won the National Book Critics Circle Award for *The Counterlife* (1986) and the National Book Award for his first book, *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959). In 2000 he published *The Human Stain*, concluding a trilogy that depicts the ideological ethos of postwar America. For *The Human Stain* Roth received his second PEN/Faulkner Award as well as Britain's W.H. Smith Award for Best Book of the Year. Philip Roth was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1933 and was educated at Bucknell University and the University of Chicago.

[Booksellers Home](#) | [Trade Home](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Site Map](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Trademark Information](#)

[Copyright © 2003 Houghton Mifflin Company, All Rights Reserved](#)