



FOREWORD

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The idea for this special issue was born in 2012 in informal conversations at the Philip Roth conference organized in Venice by Pia Masiero. We were delighted and intrigued by the immense popularity and critical acclaim Roth has gained in France. Indeed, if *The Human Stain* (2000) is his best-seller in translation, the general public's favorite, and the French literary critique's choice,¹ it is with *American Pastoral* that Roth entered the syllabus of the Ministry of Higher Education for one of the teachers' qualifying exams, which, by French standards, means a consecration for a writer.

The idea developed into a conference hosted by the University of Cergy-Pontoise in November 2012. By that time, we had already invited international Roth scholars to submit essays, but without this venue, it is unlikely that an entire journal issue devoted exclusively to *American Pastoral* would ever have come to fruition. Our heartfelt thanks go to our contributors who have all prepared original material specifically for this journal. Their impressive scholarly work has shaped our thinking and continues to inspire our understanding of Roth's oeuvre. We are also very grateful to the editors of *Cercles: A Multidisciplinary Review of Research on the English-Speaking World*, Professor Philippe Romanski and Professor Antoine Capet, for offering us the opportunity to guest-edit this theme issue.

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¹ The French version of *The Human Stain*, *La Tache*, won the Médicis Prize for foreign literature in 2002. The novel is cited among the "top 10 best sellers" of Gallimard's foreign literature series in France [see "The Gallimard Imprints: Du Monde entier." Last modified July 2006. Web. 14 March 2013. <http://www.gallimard.fr/ecoutezlire/english/monde_entier.htm>].