H9510  THE HUMAN STAIN  (USA, 2003)

Credits:  director, Robert Benton; writer, Nicholas Meyer; novel, Philip Roth.
Cast:  Anthony Hopkins, Nicole Kidman, Gary Sinese, Ed Harris.
Summary:  Melodrama set in contemporary New England with flashbacks to the
1940s. A story of two different kinds of passing: crossing the race line, and
the class line. Which is more difficult? Coleman Silk (Hopkins) is a respected
professor at a New England college who suddenly finds his life unraveling
after a comment he makes about some African-American students is
misinterpreted as a racial slur. Rather than defend himself, he resigns in a
rage. His rage is fueled by his secret: he is an African American himself
though the world believes he is Jewish. As the scandal heats up, Nathan
Zuckerman (Sinese), a writer researching a biography of Silk, begins to dig
deeply into Silk’s life. Eventually, matters are made worse when Coleman’s
affair with a young married janitor named Faunia Farley (Kidman) is
exposed. Farley’s abusive ex-husband (Harris) is a Vietnam veteran.

Arnold, Gary. “Filmmaker wrote book on adapting novels”  Washington times  (Oct
31, 2003), Show, p. D01.
Booth, Michael. “A dramatic turn: Two actresses leave the lighthearted romantic side
of films in roles that put them on a new track; Actor’s skill puts polish on
C1.
Covert, Colin. “Heavy-duty ‘Stain’ doesn’t wash”  Star tribune  [Minneapolis, MN]
(Oct 31, 2003), Freetime, p. 12E.
Dargis, Manohla. “Vital ideas are lost in the translation; As a novel, ‘The human
stain’ attacks secrecy and sanctimony. As a movie, it asks too much of both
actors and audience, stretching credulity until it snaps”  Los Angeles times
(Oct 31, 2003), Calendar, p. 4.
Gallo, Bill. “Black like me? One man’s deceptions help to highlight our own flaws in
Germain, David. “At the movies: ‘The human stain’”  Associated Press  (Oct 27,
2003), BC cycle
Gilmore, Michael T. “Secrets and lies; ‘The human stain’ and the American
Harrison, Eric. “ ‘The human stain’ leaves too many ‘what ifs’ unanswered”  Houston
chronicle  (Oct 31, 2003), Friday, p. 3.
Howe, Desson. “ ‘Human stain’ can’t solve its identity crisis”  Washington post  (Oct
31, 2003), Weekend, p. T43.
LaSalle, Mick. “ ‘Human stain’ doesn’t quite wash; Philip Roth adaptation a nice
effort but ultimately unbelievable”  San Francisco chronicle  (Oct 31, 2003),
Miramax’s ‘Human stain’ hits snag in Oscar race; Nicole Kidman cleans up”
Macdonald, Moira. “ ‘The human stain’; Anthony Hopkins portrays a man with a
secret past”  Seattle times  (Oct 31, 2003), Ticket, p. H19.
Macnab, Geoffrey. “First night: Even with the Viagra, Kidman and Hopkins fail to hit the spot; ‘The human stain’ Venice Film Festival” The independent [London] (Sep 1, 2003), p. 5.


