

A Barthes Reader

By Roland Barthes

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A Barthes Reader gives one the image of Barthes as one of the great public teachers of our time, someone who thought out, argued for, and made available several steps in a penetrating reflection on language sign systems, texts- and what they have to tell us about the concept of being human. Susan Sontag's prefatory essay is one of her finest acts of criticism, informed by intellectual sympathy and a sure sense of the contours of the mind she is describing.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Roland Barthes must be counted the most characteristic and important French intellectual of the structuralist generation that gained worldwide attention in the 1960s. Yet as an intellectual authority--maître à penser, as the French tend to say--he cut a curious figure. He detested all forms of authority, worried about the power wielded by the teacher, and called his main subject, literature, 'a grand imposture.' He could be assertive, but always in the mode of counterstatement, affirming the inverse of society's accepted dogmas and myths. . . .

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From the Back Cover
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About the Author
Roland Barthes was born in 1915 and studied French literature and classics at the University of Paris. After teaching French at universities in Romania and Egypt, he joined the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, where he devoted himself to research in sociology and lexicology. He was a professor at the Collège de France until his death in 1980.

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