



"A Very Fine Gift" and Other Writings on Theory: Essays and Interviews, Volume 1 (The French List)

Roland Barthes

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Roland Barthes, whose centenary falls in 2015, was a restless, protean thinker. A constant innovator, often as a daring smuggler of ideas from one discipline to another, he first gained an audience with his pithy essays on mass culture and then went on to produce some of the most suggestive and stimulating cultural criticism of the late twentieth century, including *Empire of Signs*, *The Pleasure of the Text*, and *Camera Lucida*. In 1976, this one time structuralist outsider was elected to a chair at France's preeminent Collège de France, where he chose to style himself as professor of literary semiology until his death in 1980.

The greater part of Barthes's published writings have been available to a French audience since 2002, but here, translator Chris Turner presents a collection of essays, interviews, prefaces, book reviews, and other journalistic material for the first time in English. Divided into five themed volumes, readers are presented in volume one, *'A Very Fine Gift' and Other Writings on Theory*, with Barthes's attempts to frame his lifelong curiosities in theoretical form, from his early musings on the sociology of literature through his high period of structuralism to his later reflections on Derrida.

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