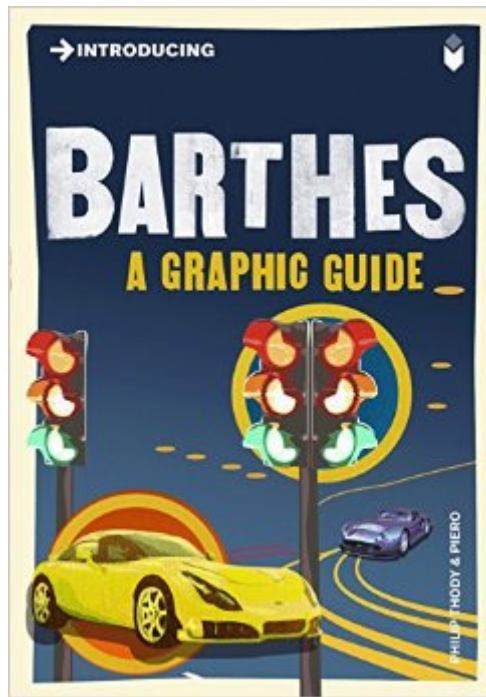


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Introducing Barthes: A Graphic Guide



Synopsis

Introducing Barthes brilliantly elucidates Roland Barthes's application of semiotics to literature, popular culture, clothes, and fashion, and explains why his thinking in this area made him a key figure in the structuralist movement of the 1960s.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have now read several of the books from this series and, I think it is safe to say that the usefulness and quality of the books varies greatly. I like the idea of using cartoons to assist the reader in understanding difficult ideas. Unfortunately, the illustrations in some of the books add nothing to them but confusion. In addition, the writing can be flat and thick, the writer having failed to take the playfulness of the series into account. Introducing Kant is a perfect example. That having been said, Introducing Barthes is without a doubt the best of the 10 or so books of the Introducing series I have read so far. The writer shows a deep sensitivity when discussing Barthes both as a thinker and as a person, and he illustrates a great deal of personal reflection regarding Barthes' ideas--this is not stuff straight off the shelf. This book was written by someone who has a deep appreciation of Barthes, and it shows. This is what most impressed me. Clearly, this text reflects the intentions of the series in its attempt to bring a difficult subject down to earth. If you want to get a foothold into Barthes, this is an excellent place to begin.

As a student of literature, I am expected to know about critical/literary theory. I cannot speak for anyone else, but I often find the reading to be very difficult, and often times, I need a little help teasing out the ideas presented beneath a proverbial mountain of specialized jargon. I have always been partial to Barthes, he's a very interesting man to say the least. This book was the spark that got me more deeply involved in his writings. I will have to disagree with the prudes who take issue with the book's illustrations. Yes, they can be perceived as a bit lewd or lascivious, but they're certainly enough to keep the pages turning. The fact is, Barthes, like Foucault, did not keep his homosexual life/appetites a secret, so the fact that there are some wild illustrations involved shouldn't make such a big stir. We are all presumably adults here. Thody, in my opinion, does a very good job of presenting difficult ideas in layman's terms. There is certainly no shame in owning/reading the "Introducing" books; sometimes we need a little help figuring out what the hell is going on in theoretical writing. These books are fantastic gateways into the otherwise closed world of theory and philosophy. Highly recommended.

I decided to pick this book up because I liked some other books of this series. I have no prior knowledge of Barthes's theories, so I can't say whether the book itself is accurate. Overall the book is easy to follow, and the author seems very knowledgeable on the subject. My biggest problems are the illustrations. I don't like the drawing style itself, but the content of the pictures perplex me. The drawings are somewhat crude to say the least, and I couldn't understand the relationship between the picture and the text. I can understand there being a little cartoon of people in an orgy when the text is talking about Barthes' perception of Sade's literary work. But a lot of the other illustrations had sexual content where I couldn't see its relevance to the text. I expect to see that kind of art in Indy comics, not in a book that talks about semiotics and the like.

This book is an extremely superficial review of Barthes' theories. The illustrations are disgusting and totally not appropriate for this book. Roland Barthes was one of the greatest mid-20th century critics and philosophers and this is not the type of book he deserves. Whoever is interested in Roland Barthes is definitely not looking for this type of book. It is a total disgrace to his books and his persona.

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