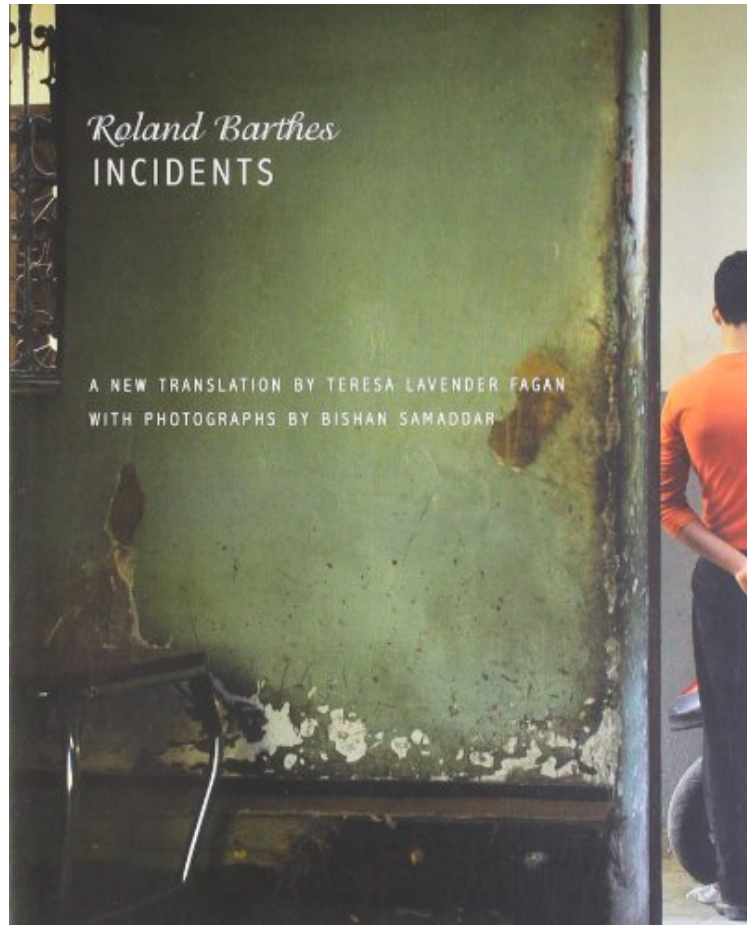


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Incidents (The French List)

Roland Barthes

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Roland Barthes : Incidents (The French List) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Incidents (The French List):

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Fragments of Incidental Sensations By A Customer Published posthumously in 1987 as a series of uncollected texts seven years after Barthes' death, "Incidents" unfolds an intriguing bricolage of observations, memories and homoerotic desires in a journal-like fashion. With "The Light of the Sud Ouest" Barthes traces back his childhood years to the rustic french countryside anchored between the Pyrenees and the "Silver Coast" of the Atlantic Ocean. Writing the country as a literary body, Barthes portrays his marking adolescent years in sensuous details. His "royal road" of childhood is paved with memorable fragrances, meteorological peculiarities of the Southwest, the charming splendors of the little villages in the Bearn region, and the natural and rich Basque countryside. The powerful images and observations evoked in "Incidents," the second text in this compilation, unmask stunningly Barthes' most inner and profound desires. The random fragments of the text from various cities and regions of Morocco exhibit Barthes' homoerotic lust in an affectionate and passionate manner. The

overt, sometimes emotionally charged segments reveal his love for the Moroccan people, the richness of its language diversity, and for young men. The reader turns into critic when strolling through the text and is incited to assemble the various fragments of perceptions that unveil not only Barthes' love for men, but also his sensitive insight into the "Maghreb" region. The reader will be seduced by descriptions of the terrace cafes overlooking the "Djemmaa el Fna" square in Marrakech or the oriental "savoir-vivre" in the souks. "Soirees de Paris," a chronological journal kept in Paris, depicts Barthes' emotionally charged evenings in Paris during the August and September of 1979. From his attraction to young hustlers to intellectual writers like Jean Genet, "Soirees de Paris" comprises the language of a sometimes sad, desperate, but motivated author/critic during the last stages of his life. Since his publication of the "Death of the Author" in 1968, Barthes performs with "Incidents" a framgmentary, open-spaced text requiring the reader's participation to be fully appreciated. The performance of a discontinuous text invites the reader to actively engage in one of the most ardent and passionate journals and descriptions of one of the most influential critics of this century. "Incidents" offers compelling individual histories and insights into Barthes' intriguing life.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. Gorgeous Prose and Beautiful Thoughts By Steven Bilow Recently, I was reading "Incidents" and the beauty of one particular statement blew me away. In the essay called "The Light of the Sud-Ouest" Barthes says: "For to read a country is first of all to percieve it in terms of the body and of memory, in terms of the the body's memory"... "That is why childhood is the royal road by which we know a country best. Ultimately, there is no Country but childhood's". That struck me as unbelievably beautiful. Each of the 4 essays in this tiny volume has at least one or 2 such beautiful tidbits. Unlike much of the convolution in Barthes other works, This book is easy to read, easy to understand, and simply lovely prose.

French philosopher and literary theorist Roland Barthes was one of the leading influences on the post-structuralist movement in twentieth-century literary thought, and some of his best-known works, like *S/Z*, speak directly to the essential and individual relationship between a reader and a literary text. In *Incidents*, readers have the privilege of going inside the life and thought of Barthes, through a book that is a testament to Barthes belief that a literary work should invite the full, active participation of the reader. The essays collected in *Incidents*, originally published in French shortly after Barthes death, provide unique insight into the authors life, his personal struggles, and his delights. Though Barthes questioned the act of keeping a journal with the aim of having it published, he decided to undertake a diary-like experiment in four parts. The first, which gives the collection its title, is a revealing personal account of his time living in Morocco. The second, *The Light of the Southwest*, is an ode to Barthes favorite region in France, while in *At Le Palace Tonight*, Barthes describes a vibrant Paris night spot. Finally, the journal entries of *Evenings in Paris* reveal Barthes as an older gay man, struggling with his desire for young lovers. Rendered here in a lyrical new translation alongside the striking photographs of Bishan Samaddar, *Incidents* will delight fans of Barthes other works, as well as anyone curious for a look inside the mind of one of the twentieth centurys foremost intellectuals.

From Library Journal Barthes (1915-80) was one of France's most influential literary theorists, whose works, such as *S/Z* (LJ 8/74), *The Pleasure of the Text* (LJ 6/1/75), and *Writing Degree Zero* (Farrar, 1977), had a profound impact on generations of Anglo-American critics. This recent volume, first published in France after the author's death, includes notes on a trip to Morocco in 1969, a brief essay on the Parisian disco *Le Palace*, and a lengthier "intimate" journal, *Soirees de Paris*, begun in 1979. The theme as such is desire, specifically gay male desire. In these texts we don't have the renowned writer whom we discreetly know to be gay, as Leo Bersani notes on the book's cover, "but the gay man who happens to be a writer." It is enough to send one back for a rereading of *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments* (LJ 8/78). In his essay, critic Miller uses his intellectual/erotic crush on Barthes, whom he never met; his imaginings of Barthes; fragments of Barthes's texts; and incidents from his own life to explore the theoretical and sometimes not so theoretical issues of contemporary gay male life. In the process we get a wonderful, humorous reading of Barthes that sends the mind leaping in hundreds of directions while repeatedly resting on the relationship between gay male identity and the literary text. Both of these books are recommended for all academic collections and for public libraries with strong literary or gay studies collections.-Brian Kenney, Pace Univ. Lib., Manhattan Campus, New York Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Incidents is replete with prowling boys, and Barthes is completely frank in describing his desires. (The book is, after all, a journal.) Even if *Incidents* fails to get you in a thoughtful mood, it should get you in a cruisy one. And there's always the something in between, which is the place that Barthes seems most often to be: the boys supply him a spark of provocation that spurs him to thought, but thought is something more successfully pursued alone. Samaddar's photos, though only a handful of them are overtly erotic, are a perfect accompaniment to the text on that front, stolen glances that capture the sensuality of fleeting encounters."--Bookslut.com (Bookslut)"Its strange disconnectedness bears witness . . . to the author's grappling with the tension between the need to remain as true as possible to the moments he portrays and his desire to embroider on them."