

vor, Mozart became increasingly solitary and, judging by letters to his wife, somewhat mad. Yet it was during these last years that he produced some of his more triumphant works, including *A Little Night Music* and *Don Giovanni*. Immediately upon Mozart's death, Viennese society, once tired of him, began hailing their "little genius." Then the myth-making began.

**A BARTHES READER**  
edited and with an introduction by Susan Sontag  
Hill & Wang, 1982  
495 pp. \$20

Literary critic, semiotician, sociologist—these were but a few of the labels affixed to the name of one of France's leading intellectuals, Roland Barthes. Though a quiet and unassuming figure (unlike Sartre or Camus), he created a stir in France with his controversial book, *Writing Degree Zero* (1953). In it, he argued that literature should not serve political or utilitarian ends; the "utopia of language" was its own ample justification. Barthes seldom failed to be provocative, whether analyzing the allure of Greta Garbo's face, the language of fashion, or the treatment of death in Tacitus's *Annals*. In his more self-reflective essays, he lived up to the standards of Montaigne, discovering universal truths in personal quirks. His essay on Voltaire, "The Last Happy Writer," exposed the shallowness of that much-overrated philosophe: "He ceaselessly dissociated intelligence from intellectuality, asserting that the world is an order if we do not try too much to order it. . . . This conduct of mind has had a great career subsequently: We call it anti-intellectualism." Before his death in 1980, Barthes's lectures had become popular events. These 30 selections help explain why.

### *Science & Technology*

**THE TANGLED WING:**  
**Biological Constraints**  
**on the Human Spirit**  
by Melvin Konner  
Holt, 1982  
543 pp. \$19.95.

Somewhere between *Aegyptopithecus*, a small apelike monkey who lived some 30 million years ago and who "makes as good an Adam as any," and the Cro-Magnon people, who 25,000 years ago drew "masterpieces of realism" on cave walls, a distinctly human