

# Roland barthes and the hermeneutic code



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

French literary theorist, philosopher, linguist, critic, and cosmetician. He had very well-established ideas and theories on how narrative texts use components of their structure to affect the audience's reading and interpretations while bringing out the multiple meanings and connotations within them. According to Barthes, all narrative texts share structural features that each narrative weaves together and uses in different ways. These structural features are known as his "five codes", and Barthes used them to analyse the different dimensions of story-telling and realism.

The appropriate and hermeneutic codes are two of Barthes' five codes. They were established by Barthes when he wished to determine the forces within a story which drive the narrative and furthermore the audience's desire to keep reading. They are the two ways in which suspense is created within a narrative text. Hermeneutic (the voice of truth) is the code of enigmas or puzzles. It refers to the suspense caused in a narrative by unanswered questions and unsolved resolutions. Plot elements in the narrative raise questions for the audience, and the audience is generally not satisfied until the questions are answered and all "loose ends" are tied.

The lack of explanation of the hermeneutic code right away creates a tension, which engages the audience, and leads it to some sort of prediction about what will happen at the end. Usually, a narrative will towards its end explain the previous events and solve any previously unanswered questions. The best example of a narrative which operates on the hermeneutic code is the detective story. We are introduced to the unsolved mystery at the beginning of the story, and the rest of the narrative is devoted to the

detective uncovering clues and piecing them together to determine the solution and solve the puzzles Introduced In the Initial scenes.