

of policies and strategies for students and academics to fulfil their potential, and to appreciate the losses entailed and the grit and courage required in working towards personal and professional transformation. The concerns examined in this book are relevant to student development, and to institutional and individual ideas of self and identity formation that underlie matters of staff development such as coaching and mentoring. Despite the difficult struggles and disturbing conditions of mind analysed in the book it left me with an unexpected feeling of hope that individuals could overcome adversity and achieve a condition of spontaneity. In common with the other two books reviewed here it is a text that I look forward to going back to and re-reading.

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**Home is where one starts from: one woman's memoir**, by Barbara Tizard, Edinburgh, Word Power Books, 2010, 310 pp., £12.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-0-9549185-8-3

It would take more than an entire *London Review of Education* to list, exhaustively, what this book is *about*, what it teaches its readers. Highlights include: socialist Sunday schools and their 10 secular commandments, Greek dancing as a summer alternative to piano at a certain type of girls' boarding school, the birth of the Radio Times, the Queen of Puddings, shifts in the sexual mores of the working and middle classes from 1920 to the present day, the British Communist Party's perceptions of Soviet Russia (before and after 1956), what one ordered at Lyons Corner Houses and British Restaurants, the unspoken night-time fears of children during the Blitz, High Days, the complications and contradictions of child evacuation and 'billeting' during the Second World War, how to butter an entire loaf of bread, Popper and Marxism, changes in approaches to childbirth ('Push, Mrs Robinson, push, just as though you were going to the lavatory!' (48)), who ate offal and who didn't, and the challenges of running the Thomas Coram Research Unit. This is a social history in the form of a memoir, written by someone who clearly knows how to teach, eminent psychologist and educationalist Professor Barbara Tizard.

It is also a love letter to her mother, a woman (like anyone honest) full of contradictions: a socialist who devoted her working life to improving the educations of working class children, and yet did not seem to want her own children playing with them. She was an antimonarchist who refused an OBE on the grounds that she deserved to be a CBE or a Dame instead. She was also a woman who, as head of the National Union of Teachers, gave stirring speeches on the importance of education to build moral courage and cooperation, and lived these values in every footstep of her hard-fought independent life. The mother dominating this memoir is a woman impossible not to admire, yet difficult for the reader to like, perhaps simply because we are so busy liking the young Barbara.

*Home is where one starts from* could also be described as a story of the English class system, told as a tale of food and rooms. Professor Tizard notes that when reading biographies and memoirs she always wants to know what people ate, and I think most of us feel this way (how can we understand people's lives without understanding what they ate and where they slept?), and yet so often these quiet, uncelebrated and often solitary aspects of life are missing from written accounts. This memoir brings them back: the Post Toasties, boiled bacon, Apple Charlotte and bread, butter and jam of her grandmother's house; the lumpy porridge, boiled fish and 5:30 bedtimes of her first boarding school; and the hot suppers which appeared along with

her mother's partner in the Chelsea flat where coal came up, and rubbish down, a little lift outside the kitchen window. It is a story of a life lived in over 50 bedrooms and across countless kitchen tables, from Walls ice-cream in West Ham to chick-pea fritters in the Sudan.

*Home* is, finally, an autobiography. Professor Tizard explains that though she originally intended this memoir to cover her early life, up until she, as a young mother, finished her PhD, she later decided to extend it into a selective account of her life to date. In doing so, it became the autobiography of a truly impressive and inspiring child, girl, young woman and older woman, a self-pronounced rebel who nevertheless searched out – and won – conventional approval in the form of degrees, awards and prizes. It describes a person did things her way and frequently had to do them on her own: her school German exam, her doctoral thesis, and perhaps this book. This book has not been edited for maximum commerciality. It reads less like a polished stone of a carefully crafted memoir and more like an oral account told on a quiet Sunday afternoon, where the teller has plenty of time for digressions and is at ease to decide what to add and when. And why not? If there is ever a time when a writer is entitled to tell it her way, surely this is it.

And yet, in keeping with the contradictions running throughout its pages, for all its un-literary-ness, *Home* is also written with the skilful use of what could be called two literary devices, more associated with the novel. The first is the occasional use of what literary studies calls an 'unreliable narrator,' in this case, Barbara as a girl. For most of the memoir, Professor Tizard, the older woman, writes of her younger self, not as her younger self. However, very occasionally (for example when explaining her mother's constant absences during her childhood) she writes from the perspective of her much younger self. This conjures up the child and, sitting her beside the older woman, says far more about this particular mother-daughter relationship, as well as about adult recollection of childhood understandings, than an adult comment would be able to express. The second occurs in her very last paragraph. After discussing the pleasures of friends and family in old age, lest 'I may seem smug' (305) the author reveals in one devastating line a series of painful experiences – tragedies even – that she has chosen *not* to write about, leaving the reader to reinterpret the previous 304 pages in a new, and humbled, light.

A foolproof test of the quality of a book is what one *does* immediately after finishing it. When I finished *Home is where one starts from*, I wrote myself a list of things that I had to read, starting with Professor Tizard's own research, and ending with an account of London life during the Blitz, and the works of Karl Popper. But first I felt slightly sad to have finished.

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**Key issues for education researchers**, by Diana Burton and Steve Bartlett, London, Sage Publications, 2009, 192 pp., £19.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1847873583

**Causation in educational research**, by Keith Morrison, Abingdon, Routledge, 2009, 256 pp., £20.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-0415496490

*Key issues for education researchers* is part of a series, 'Key issues in education studies', published by Sage Publications. The core text in the series, *Introduction to education studies* (Bartlett and Burton 2007) is written by the same authors so as a result the two books complement each