

L I T E R A R Y H U B



Tara Westover
Cusk, Jennifer Egan,
Madame Bovary

Rapid-fire book recs from the

By Book Marks



7, 2022



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Welcome to the Book Marks Questionnaire, where we ask authors questions about the books that have shaped them.

This week, we spoke to the author of *Educated* (out this week in paperback), **Tara Westover**.

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Book Marks: Favorite re-read?

Tara Westover: At this moment, probably *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes. I read it for the first time a few years ago, and I have read it several times since. I never tire of it; his language and point of view are just so captivating. It is a book full of beautiful ideas.

BM: A book that blew your mind?

TW: I recently read *Playing with Reality*, a short book by the famous British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott. That book is about so many things, but at its core I suppose it is about early life and development—the habits we develop early on that define how we relate to ourselves and to others.

BM: Last book you read?

TW: Last week I read *H is for Hawk* by Helen I. It was even better than I remembered it being.

BM: A book that made you cry?

TW: A memoir called *Why Religion?* by Elaine. It's about ancient religious texts and philosophies. She suffered great loss in her memoir she brings together her personal biography with ancient texts, delivering a beautiful and thoughtful book about loss and meaning. I cried at several passages. Such a beautiful book.

BM: What book from the past year would you like to give a shout-out to?

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TW: Well, technically it's from this year, but I just got my hands on an advanced copy of Jennifer Egan's new book, *The Candy House*. It's a novel about technology, and it is a companion to her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *A Visit From the Goon Squad*. It does not disappoint. Egan is such a marvelous and inventive writer. I'm a huge admirer.

BM: What's one book you wish you had read during your teenage years?

TW: Allison Bechdel's *Are You My Mother?* Although it's doubtful I would have understood it.

BM: Favorite book to give as a gift?

TW: I have become a little phobic of technology recently, as I have noticed the unhealthiness of my relationship with it. A bizarre and brilliant book that I love on this subject is Jaron Lanier's *You Are Not a Gadget*.

BM: Classic book on your To Be Read pile?

TW: *Madame Bovary*. Somehow I have never read it.

BM: Favorite book no one has heard of?

TW: It's quite possible that lot of people have heard of it, but I have been assigning it in psyche classes, but last year I read it and I can't stop thinking about it. I love books about what sort of creatures we are, and this is one of the best on that subject.

BM: Book(s) you're reading right now?

TW: The other day, I found a book in my apartment that I had never read before, and have no memory of buying. It was *Second Place* by Rachel Cusk. I opened it and read the first sentence and could not believe how beautiful it was. Cusk is an incredible writer. I am so grateful to whoever left it at my house.

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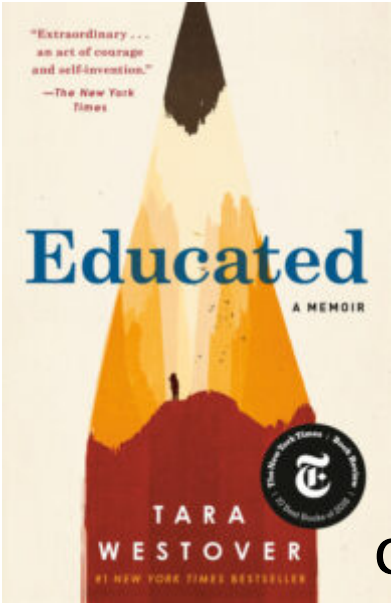


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Tara Westover was born in Idaho in 1986. She received her BA from Brigham Young University in 2008 and was subsequently awarded a Gates Cambridge Scholarship. She earned an MPhil from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 2009, and in 2010 was a visiting fellow at Harvard University. She returned to Cambridge, where she was awarded a PhD in history in 2014. *Educated* is her first book.



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Tara Westover’s *Educated* is out this week in paperback from Random House

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