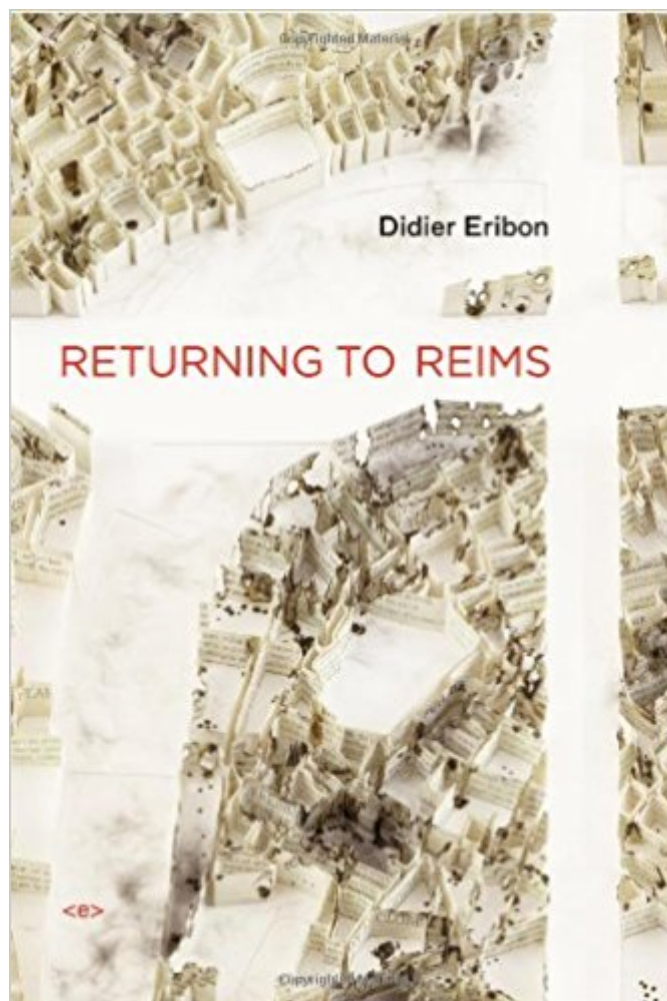


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# Returning To Reims (Semiotext(e) / Foreign Agents)



## Synopsis

On thinking the matter through, it doesn't seem exaggerated to assert that my coming out of the sexual closet, my desire to assume and assert my homosexuality, coincided within my personal trajectory with my shutting myself up inside what I might call a class closet. -- from *Returning to Reims*

After his father dies, Didier Eribon returns to his hometown of Reims and rediscovers the working-class world he had left behind thirty years earlier. For years, Eribon had thought of his father largely in terms of the latter's intolerable homophobia. Yet his father's death provokes new reflection on Eribon's part about how multiple processes of domination intersect in a given life and in a given culture. Eribon sets out to investigate his past, the history of his family, and the trajectory of his own life. His story weaves together a set of remarkable reflections on the class system in France, on the role of the educational system in class identity, on the way both class and sexual identities are formed, and on the recent history of French politics, including the shifting voting patterns of the working classes -- reflected by Eribon's own family, which changed its allegiance from the Communist Party to the National Front. *Returning to Reims* is a remarkable book of sociological inquiry and critical theory, of interest to anyone concerned with the direction of leftist politics in the contemporary world, and to anyone who has ever experienced how sexual identity can clash with other parts of one's identity. A huge success in France since its initial publication in 2009, *Returning to Reims* received enthusiastic reviews in *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *L'Express*, *Les Inrockuptibles*, and elsewhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An eminent Parisian intellectual, gay and politically progressive, from a conservative, working -- class provincial family, Didier Eribon has written a book that will be of great interest to those concerned with questions of social class, sexuality, and intellectual community. Returning to Reims is a fascinating and courageous account of how one of France's leading writers has negotiated a complex, frequently conflicted confluence of social and psychic identities. (Leo Bersani, author of *Homos* and coauthor of *Intimacies*) This intensely personal account of Didier Eribon's family is a fascinating and compelling read... The book is beautifully written (and as beautifully translated). It is at once pleasureable and edifying to read. (Joan W. Scott, Institute for Advanced Study) This is a beautiful book about suppression, losing touch with your roots, and regaining balance. (Art in America)

Didier Eribon, Professor of Sociology at the University of Amiens, is well known for his groundbreaking biography, *Michel Foucault*, first published in 1989. He is also the author of *Insult and the Making of the Gay Self*, as well as numerous other books of critical theory.

Didier Eribon is a distinguished French journalist and scholar, whose origins are in the working class. He argues in this book that he faced much more difficulty crossing class boundaries than he did living as a gay man. His account of the difficulties he had making his way through school is convincing and moving. Yet it is not clear whether the resistance came more from the upper classes not wanting someone from the working class or the resistance came from the gravitation pull of his working class origins. Perhaps it is impossible to say.

There are very few true autobiographies. This is one of them. It is well-written and moving. It will make you think, if it doesn't make you cry.

Just as described and fast delivery!

Much has been written and said about this seminal work. By way of intimate insights in his personal life, Didier Eribon offers a fascinating access to pressing political questions of our times. How can we explain the success of right-wing parties in Europe? How can issues of homosexuality, social class and a position within the academic field be treated within a common framework? Eribon, heavily influenced by French philosopher and social scientist Pierre Bourdieu accomplishes this feat.

However, the downside of this book can be seen in its emotional, sometimes mournful tone...

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