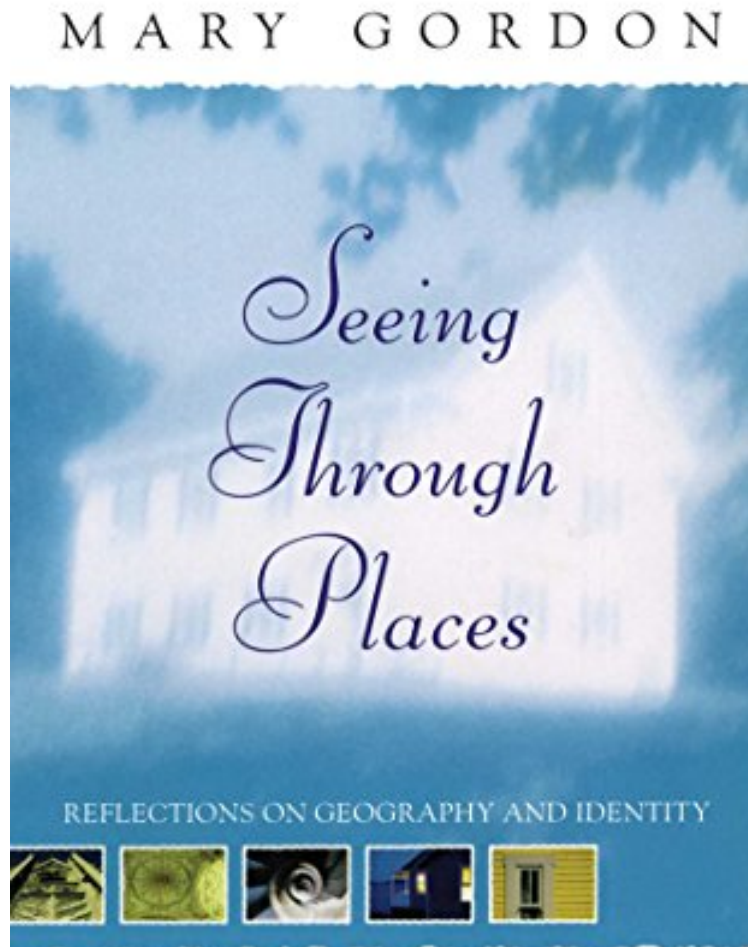


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Seeing Through Places: Reflections on Geography and Identity (English Edition)


Von Mary Gordon

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"Gordon evokes the lost objects of all our childhoods . . .
[She] is capable of describing the complexity of the human
heart with eloquence and intelligence."
—Sheila Kohler, San Francisco Chronicle

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Von Mary Gordon : Seeing Through Places: Reflections on Geography and Identity (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Seeing Through Places: Reflections on Geography and Identity (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. she put the "awe" in "ev-awe-cative"Von Cynthia RuckerThe first essay, "Grandmother's house", made me shut the book and just gaze for minutes at a time. In reading about her childhood, she forced me to revisit my own "places" before I could come back to hers. Rereading her prose is so pleasurable; it 's like glancing twice at an attractive stranger on a street. The first and last essays seemed the most personal, the best "placement" for them. Everyone should reflect upon her life's places after savoring this book.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Another home run for Mary GordonVon Ein KundeSeeing through places is enchanting. Full of the sharp insight and beautiful description I've come to expect from Mary Gordon. A pleasure to read.

KurzbeschreibungMary Gordon, bestselling author of *Spending* and *The Shadow Man*, investigates the role that place plays in the formation of identity -- the connections between how we experience place and how we become ourselves. From her grandmother's house, which stood at the center of her childhood life, to a rented house on Cape Cod, where she began to mature as a writer, Mary Gordon navigates the reader through these spaces and worlds with subtlety and style. Wise, humorous, and intelligent, *Seeing Through Places* illuminates the relationship between the physical, emotional, and intellectual architectures of our lives, showing us the far-reaching power that places ultimately have in influencing a life.From Kirkus sAn evocative memoir that guides the reader through the rooms, houses, churches, streets, and piazzas that have shaped novelist Gordon's life. As mysterious and illuminating as wandering the catacombs, this recollection captures the light and shadow, color and texture, of the places of the authors past. Gordon (*Spending*, 1997) first revisits the alternating light and dimness of her grandmother's house, her home after her father died (the agonizing search for the truth about him recorded in *The Shadow Man*, 1996). Her baby-sitter's house is dark with heavy furniture, but there are four nubile daughters who sparked Gordon's interest in the "exacting enterprise of femaleness." Among "Places to Play," she recalls a corner of her father's study where "I was trying to construct a world of lightness," as well as the landlord's apartment, where the "fragrance of Italian coffee" remains the "wholly benignant emblem of domestic order," yet it was the world of books and dolls and imagination where she really played. Sacred spaces indicate the grip of the Roman Catholic Church on her life, albeit Rome was where she finally turned her back on the Vatican. Cape Cod opens a window on her writing life, her dream house (and its mortgage) sacrificed for the freedom to create as she pleased. The neighborhood of Columbia University (as a child she chanted the names of the buildings on Central Park WestSan Remo, Kenilworth, El Dorado) and the American Museum of Natural History is home for her now. Places, no matter how carefully described, are still only settings for the people in them, and these places of memory are dramatically peopled with Mother, Father, Saint Cecilia, and Marjorie Morningstar. Anyone who's exhumed childhood memories via venues of the past will respond to these recollections of scent, color, and sound, where even toast and coffee are elevated to icons. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.From Library JournalProlific and noted author Gordon (*The Rest of Life*; *Spending*) here presents a collection of essays loosely centered around the locations and people that influenced her maturation and shaped her as a writer. She begins with her harsh grandmother's old-fashioned house and then revisits the working-class homes of her babysitters and neighborhood friends in a suburb of New York City. She recalls spending time with her unhappy, dissatisfied parents and, as a young Catholic, engaging in church rituals and socializing with priests. She laments not being able to buy a house she once rented on Cape Cod and marvels at having ended up in an apartment on the Upper West Side. These pieces reveal the beginnings of the themes Gordon has developed throughout her writing career-- introspection, discontentment, sacrifice, guilt, and bitter redemption. The collection evokes strong, nostalgic images, particularly for women whose formative years were the mid-forties and fifties. And although her insights are sometimes over-intellectualized and her prose overwrought, these memoirs are an important adjunct to her works. Recommended for all libraries.--Carol Ann McAllister, Coll. of William Mary Lib., Williamsburg, VA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.