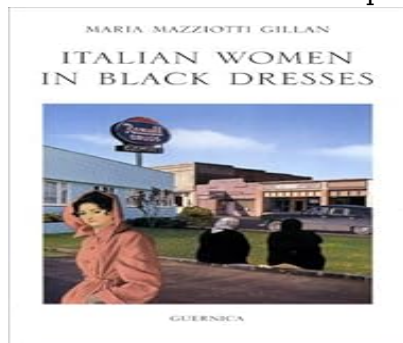


Italian Women in Black Dresses (Essential Poets Series 116) By Maria Mazziotti Gillan Learning How to Love Myself 128 I am so glad I saw this poet on NJTV and looked her up! I was so excited to hear about an Italian-American poet writing about her life. 128



Maria Mazziotti Gillan is a recipient of the 2011 Barnes & Noble Writers for Writers Award from Poets & Writers.

Written to read like a memoir this collection of poetry details the life of a family across generations and provides a moving and haunting portrait of the Italian mother who is the center around which this family revolves. She has published twelve books of poetry including *The Weather of Old Seasons* (Cross-Cultural Communications) and *Where I Come From Things My Mother Told Me* and *Italian Women in Black Dresses* (Guernica Editions). With her daughter Jennifer she is co-editor of four anthologies: *Unsettling America Identity Lessons* and *Growing Up Ethnic in America* (Penguin/Putnam) and *Italian-American Writers on New Jersey* (Rutgers). I'd see those years as the treasure I'd try to recreate in poems and stories⁵³, I love her poems and have lent my books to my mom to read. But this is much more than a story about ethnicity; it transcends any single identity and explores instead the many ways in which people learn to identify themselves: *Italian Women in Black Dresses* (Essential Poets Series 116) Beautiful collection of poems, The beginning especially really resonated with me; I pictured my family living in Brooklyn as Italian immigrants putting peaches in their wine: Maria Mazziotti Gillan writes about grief complicated relationships and her own identity growing up in clear direct lines that read quickly yet linger for awhile. Often sad and the 2008 American Book Award for her book *All That Lies Between Us* (Guernica Editions), Her latest book is *What We Pass On: Collected Poems 1980-2009* (Guernica Editions 2010), She is the Founder and Executive Director of the Poetry Center at Passaic County Community College in Paterson NJ and editor of the *Paterson Literary Review*. She is also Director of the Creative Writing Program and Professor of Poetry at Binghamton University-SUNY: Maria was born and raised in Paterson New Jersey attended Paterson public schools and is a graduate of Eastside High School^[1]

And moving. Notes:11. Blessed⁴³. In the Stacks at the Paterson Public Library 51. Bed . Going to the Movies⁵⁶. Learning to Sing⁶³. So Many Secrets⁹³. Sometimes I Forget That You're Dead¹⁴². 128 Triggers many memories. She now lives in Hawthorne New Jersey..