

The Exploration of the Secret Smile: The Language of Art and of Homosexuality in Frank O'Hara's Poetry (American University Studies)

By Alice C. Parker


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This study of the work of the New York poet Frank O'Hara (1926-1966) emphasizes a largely overlooked aspect of O'Hara's poetics: the aspect of the urban homosexual, or gay, experience. It also emphasizes his frequent fusion of the aesthetics of poetry with the aesthetics of the visual arts. Revealing the importance of the deliberately (given the societal «mood» of the '50s and '60s) sedimented homosexual meaning in O'Hara's poetry, as well as the importance of the art of the Abstract Expressionists, *The Exploration of the Secret Smile* offers a new outlook on the congruence of his poetic canon.

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Review

«Parker's analysis of the works of Frank O'Hara and the integration of his sexual orientation into the analysis are scholarship of the first order. This orderly, scholarly work is also highly readable...She writes beautifully.» (George J. Dillavou, The University of Rhode Island)

«This is an important contribution to the thoughtful reading of Frank O'Hara's poetry.» (Nancy Potter, The University of Rhode Island)

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