

Hazel Smith: On "They Dream Only of America"

In this poem there is one very obvious metonymic string (burns/ash tray/cigar) and the possibility of one or two others (sign/key), but on the whole new metonymies proliferate, constantly pushing the poem outward. There is therefore considerably less sensation of the poem being pulled back into metaphorical cohesion than there is, for example, in 'Chez Jane'. A number of critics have attempted to read this poem metaphorically, but the poem does not lend itself as a whole to metaphorical interpretation. ?"They Dream Only of America"?, inhabits the extremes of deconstruction; it does not move in and out of deconstruction and reconstruction.

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Excerpted Criticism ^[1]

Publication:

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John Ashbery ^[2]

Author:

Hazel Smith ^[3]

Poem:

They Dream Only of America ^[4]

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