

Kaela Brandi
Prof. Jonas
FYEN-125-NN
March 20th, 2017

Getting Up Ahead of Someone

When a person reads a certain poem, they can think of memories relating to that poem and the imagery that comes to it. *Getting Up Ahead of Someone* is a poem about a summer night in the Hampton's, on Long Island, where Frank O'Hara sits on the porch in the early hours of the morning and he can't sleep but he says he's writing and reading poetry during those hours. I don't understand why he can't sleep, it doesn't really clarify that part but my theory is that he is overthinking his decisions of life or a stressful situation made him not able to fall asleep. This poem reminds me of the times, I stayed over my cousin's house in the Hamptons. They had a summer house and we use to sit on the porch in the backyard, just overlooking the scenery at six in the evening. When you're a little kid, you get a grasp of how beautiful the trees and the sunset mix together and how everything in that moment just feels right like you're meant to be there in that moment to appreciate the summer nights. O'Hara describes this in a little bit by saying "I cough a lot (sinus?) so I get up and have some tea with cognac. It is dawn, the light flows evenly along the lawn in chilly Southampton." I thought by the title that it was about getting up ahead of someone career-wise but it was about literally about getting up before everyone else wakes up or was he the only one up? I feel like O'Hara spent a lot of his nights not sleeping but just thinking and writing poetry while drinking some type of hard liquor. When he writes poems like these, it makes me relate because of my childhood. O'Hara mentions Sag Harbor, it reminds me again of

my childhood because my dad is an electrical inspector and he has inspections out there so whenever I could I'll go with him on a nice, spring day and just drive through the town and see the classic mom and pop shops they have. Those are the moments you have to cherish, generations nowadays don't really cherish memories because they're so technology-obsessed. Maybe that's what O'Hara was trying to get across, he's cherishing the memories of staying up late and maybe he wrote this indirectly, so people can remember the memories of their life.