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**FEELING AT HOME IN JOHN DOS PASSOS'
*MANHATTAN TRANSFER***

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

John Dos Passos is recognised as a key American modernist author, and *Manhattan Transfer* (first published in 1925) may well be his most acclaimed work. Nevertheless, scholarly interest in Dos Passos has declined over the past decades. As a result, certain aspects of his work remain under-researched. This study takes an innovative interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of *Manhattan Transfer* by integrating findings from contemporary social science research into a literary analysis. The focus of the analysis is on distilling the key attributes of the major characters' sense of home. These attributes are then examined more generally, with a view to refining our real-world understanding of what it means to feel at home in a contemporary urban context.

The Introduction contains a brief biographical overview of John Dos Passos and an outline of *Manhattan Transfer*'s plot. Next, it provides a summary of the previous research into Dos Passos' work, noting the predominant focus on his experimental style and unusual form of character development. The Literature Review consists of three subchapters. The first subchapter aims to contextualise the work of John Dos Passos by providing an overview of other authors' writings about the city during the period of literary modernism. The second subchapter explores those factors identified within the social sciences as contributing to a feeling of home. This subchapter also introduces Augé's concept of an urban non-place, and the concept of displacement-in-place. The third subchapter of the Literature Review provides a justification for the analysis of *Manhattan Transfer* as a means of improving our understanding of what it means to feel at home in a contemporary urban context. Previous research on Dos Passos' depiction of home in *Manhattan Transfer* is presented, and some relevant gaps for further analysis are identified.

This study's methodology develops a set of positive criteria, based on social science research, with which to analyse the various depictions in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* of the experience of feeling at home in 1920s New York City. The study systematically applies these criteria to a literary analysis of four major characters, in order to distil and profile their various experiences of home. Additional factors arising within the text itself are also identified, and their correlation with the characters' sense of home is likewise examined. Conclusions are then drawn about the sets of factors which appear to contribute most towards the characters' sense of home. These findings are then extended to the real world, with a view to updating our contemporary understanding of the concept of home in an urban environment.

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INTRODUCTION

John Dos Passos is widely acknowledged as a key modernist author. Indeed, some scholars identify his work as being central to the study of American modernism. For example, Beeston draws our attention to "the crucial importance of his work, and particularly of his first major novel, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), to an understanding of American modernism and the history of the novel more generally" (Beeston 2016: 636). Similarly, Mráz (2007–2008: 66) argues that "in John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), [we find] a paradigmatic example of the Modernist city novel."¹

Given such acclaim, it is therefore curious that Dos Passos and his 1925 novel *Manhattan Transfer* remain relatively under-researched. Whereas Dos Passos' immediate contemporaries, such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and F. Scott Fitzgerald need no introduction amongst literary scholars, Dos Passos, in contrast, is not equally recognised. Moreover, the quantity of research over time into Dos Passos and his works has declined since the 1980s. For example, the extensive bibliography compiled by Campbell (2015) features fewer academic articles on Dos Passos each decade since the 1980s (see Figure 1). Although this bibliography is not necessarily representative of the full body of research on Dos Passos, it nevertheless serves as an indicator of interest in his work. The observation that interest in Dos Passos has declined since the 1980s has also been made by Harding (2003: 106): "since the 1980s Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* has been afforded such scant criticism that it seems even less well known as we move into the twenty-first century." This relative lack of attention may be attributable to the fact that Dos Passos fell somewhat out of fashion in his own time. Indeed, by 1940 Orwell had already observed that Dos Passos was "not [among] the writers who are in fashion at this moment" (Orwell 1940: 9). Unfortunately,

¹ Broadly speaking, a Modernist city novel is experimental in form, and explores the key themes of rapid urbanisation and social alienation.

the novel also contains several examples of racist language, which renders it dated and offensive at times for the modern reader.

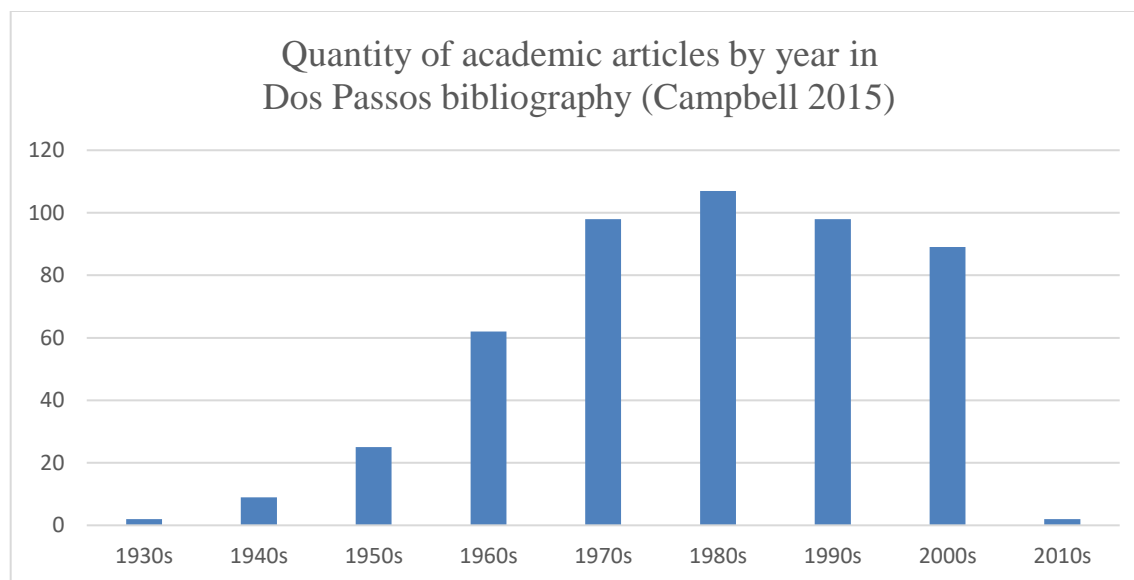


Figure 1.

Dos Passos was born in Chicago in 1896 but lived out his early years in Europe. According to Harding (2003: 18), this was due to his status as the illegitimate and unacknowledged son of a prominent American businessman. Aged about fourteen, he returned to the United States and assumed his father's surname (Dos Passos). As a young adult, he graduated from Harvard and served in Italy and France during WWI: he also participated in the Spanish Civil War (Harding 2003: 18). Unsurprisingly, his earliest novels, published in 1920 and 1921, dealt with the experience of war. Of his many works, his most well recognised include *Manhattan Transfer* (first published in 1925) and the *U.S.A.* trilogy (the volumes of which were first published in 1930, 1932 and 1936 respectively) (Harding 2003: 106). Dos Passos continued to write productively until his death in 1970, with his final publication being the post-humous *Century's Ebb* in 1975 (Harding 2003: 19).

Across Dos Passos' long career as a writer, he altered his style and preoccupations significantly, predominately as a function of his changing political convictions. Whereas in

his early adulthood, Dos Passos contributed to "Leftist publications" and participated in the Spanish Civil War, by late life he had become right-leaning and supportive of the Republican Party (Harding 2003: 106). The novel *Manhattan Transfer* is a product of Dos Passos' early political phase, in which he tended towards anti-capitalism (Harding 2003: 18).

As noted by Beeston (2016) and Mráz (2007–2008) above, *Manhattan Transfer* is possibly Dos Passos' most renowned work. Indeed, Harding (2003: 18) singles out *Manhattan Transfer* as the novel which "launched his career as a radical modernist author." In other words, *Manhattan Transfer* was at the very forefront of modernist writing in its utilisation of "expressionistic techniques" to explore themes of "materialism and soul-deadening conformity," and in its elevation of the city's role to a level of importance greater than that of its characters (Harding 2003: 107).

It is no simple task to provide a synopsis of the novel's plot. Indeed, Faust (2008: 32) opines that "Manhattan Transfer is a novel with no apparent plot." Alongside descriptions of skyscrapers and crowds, Dos Passos sketches the lives of an assembly of modern characters, all of whom are grappling with the consequences of social disruption. Whether they are immigrants, rural migrants, failed financiers, professionals, politicians or actors, many of the characters in *Manhattan Transfer* share the experience of some form of displacement. Additionally, as Faust (2008: 32) observes, "there are several threads and themes holding the segments of narrative together." Amongst these themes, Faust (2008: 32) counts alcohol, social mobility, marriage, promiscuity and suicide.

There are several recurrent characters whose trajectories span much of *Manhattan Transfer's* length. These include Jimmy Herf, Ellen Thatcher and Congo Jake. Jimmy Herf, like the author himself, arrives in Manhattan in late childhood. After the death of his mother, who was his sole parent, Jimmy falls under the care of his wealthy and socially established relatives in Manhattan. He declines a career in his uncle's firm in favour of one in journalism.

He then drifts through adulthood without any clear life arc, despite experiencing many of the recognised milestones, such as war, marriage and parenthood. Ultimately, he departs Manhattan, but without any subsequent destination. Ellen Thatcher was born in New York and lives there for most of her life, other than for the few years she spends in Paris during World War I. Ellen begins her career as a stage actor, but later finds work as a magazine editor. She is known for her striking beauty and many of the male characters are infatuated with her. She marries three of them (John Oglethorpe, Jimmy Herf and George Baldwin), although the only person she herself loves is Stan Emery, the self-destructive and alcoholic son of an established New York family. Congo Jake is introduced to the reader as a young sailor from France, but he ultimately transforms himself into a wealthy New York bootlegger, with a Park Avenue apartment.

Much of the existing scholarship on Dos Passos focuses on his experimentation with the novel's form. In this, Dos Passos was not alone. Indeed, one of the characteristics of literary modernism is an intense experimentation with form. Bradbury (1987: 31) attributes the large-scale reconsideration of artistic form at this time in part to the tremendous impact of the political and social changes leading into the modernist period which, in turn, led to the "displacing [of] the role of artists /.../ in some sense dislocating them from the familiar or the homemade." Particularly in the American context, Bradbury (1987: 33) draws a direct connection between modernisation and changes to literary form: "Americans had a taste for stylistic radicalism, for forms that suggested a modern version of life, for new structures." Bradbury (1987: 33) attributes this taste, in part, to the unique relationship in America between modern art and "the cultural experience of an advanced or futuristic society."

Of the major modernist authors, Harding explicitly recognises Dos Passos' role in the construction of the modern American style. Specifically, he credits Dos Passos with

[a] role in the reconstruction of a new form of American poetics, one marked by linguistic transformations and dislocations of style and form to represent the mix of sounds, styles and cultures that is modern America: Manhattan. (Harding 2003: xi)

Miller (2015) also draws our attention to Dos Passos' fragmented style. Indeed, he describes the style of Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* as a "textual cacophony [which] includes newspaper and song fragments, vernacular and multilingual dialogue, hairpin perspectival shifts, and the clatter of mechanized urbanity" (Miller 2015). Miller attributes Dos Passos' fragmented style to the innovations in visual media which were occurring at the time. Specifically, Miller (2015) notes the influence of "early cinema, experimental painters, and the image fashioning of journalism and advertising." In contrast, Beeston attributes the "fragmentary, additive narrative tactics" of *Manhattan Transfer* to the influence of the circus, as well as to the influence of the burlesque and vaudeville theatrical styles, rather than avant-garde cinema (Beeston 2016: 637-638). Notwithstanding this difference in attribution, Beeston (2016: 637) likewise recognises Dos Passos' significant contribution to the modernist style and advocates a "recovery for his writing in discussions of 1920s modernist fiction."

Another innovative aspect of Dos Passos' style is his unusual character development. For example, Gelfant notes the "innumerable characters" in his novels and their distinctive lack of depth (Gelfant 1961: 133). Specifically, Gelfant (1961: 146) draws attention to the "peculiarly dehumanized quality of Dos Passos' characters, their flatness and helplessly drifting quality." Gelfant also finds a lack of resolution in Dos Passos' characters. For example, she highlights Dos Passos' exploration of "various facets of the personality" and the dramatization of "possible alternate destinies" for his characters (Gelfant 1961: 133). Faust (2008: 33) similarly notes the lack of character development in Dos Passos' work. However, whereas Gelfant (1961) reads a search for personal identity into Dos Passos' underdeveloped characters, Faust instead attributes their insubstantiality to the author's predominant focus on political concerns:

Manhattan Transfer was one of many writings that criticized the state of the nation in the 1920s, but rather than focus on a few particular characters in writing about the faults of that decade, Dos Passos

threw his intellect around the problems themselves, so the reader never gets to know his characters well. (Faust 2008: 33)

Despite the different interpretations given for Dos Passos' unusually light character development, both Gelfant and Faust are unified in their acknowledgment of this as being characteristic of his form.

Apart from character development, Gelfant (1961) also comments on the inconsistent narrative viewpoints in Dos Passos' work, that is, on the "contradictions as well as changes in viewpoint" within his novels (Gelfant 1961: 134). For example, the fragments within each chapter shift without warning from the viewpoint of one character to that of another. Gelfant also notes this pattern at a higher level; that is, across the body of work Dos Passos completed in his lifetime. According to Gelfant, Dos Passos' works tend to "expand, modify, or reject what they have previously resolved" (Gelfant 1961: 133).

Beyond his technical contributions to literary modernism, what makes Dos Passos of continued relevance is his ability to fuse formal experimentalism with keen social observation. Indeed, Harding (2003: xii) labels Dos Passos as nothing less than a "paradigmatic example" of "[both] the aesthetic principles and critical ideologies of American modernism."² Furthermore, Harding (2003: xii) credits Dos Passos with "deconstruct[ing] the boundaries between history and fiction, creating a new kind of cultural history and a new kind of fiction."³ In the same vein, but referring specifically to *Manhattan Transfer*, Eckman (1998: 129) argues that it "represents, in short, a crucial intersection of the experimental techniques ascribed to 'modernism' and the social changes of modernity." More specifically, Gelfant finds that "[*Manhattan Transfer*'s] achievement is also its serious social and moral interpretation of a twentieth-century way of life" (Gelfant; cited in Eckman

² As outlined above, one of the major aesthetic principles of American modernism is its fragmented style; its critical ideologies include anti-capitalism and the exploration of issues associated with rapid urbanisation, such as social isolation.

³ According to Harding (2003: xii), this is achieved, in part, by Dos Passos' "transatlantic pattern of thought." In other words, Dos Passos' European childhood and subsequent travels gave him the ability to see the USA from a distinct perspective.

1998: 129).

The cultural and social issue most often identified by scholars of Dos Passos' work is that of change. For some scholars, the issue of change is represented negatively in Dos Passos' work. For example, according to Faust (2008: 33), the overarching theme of *Manhattan Transfer* is social decline, specifically "the inexorable decline of American lives in the wake of the war" (Faust 2008: 33). Other scholars find Dos Passos' representation of these changes to be more neutral. For example, Eckman notes that *Manhattan Transfer* depicts the massive demographic changes which occurred in New York City in the early twentieth century, particularly "the ceaseless migration (and immigration) of people and capital to the city" (Eckman 1998: 140). Eckman (1998: 138) also notes that *Manhattan Transfer* includes characters who are "identified as 'other' in terms of ethnicity and class." In both cases, Eckman appears to view Dos Passos' treatment of the issue of social mobility as being relatively neutral.

Another social issue identified by scholars as being present in Dos Passos' work is the rapid pace of social change. For example, Eckman draws our attention to a scene in *Manhattan Transfer* in which the character Ellen seeks an abortion, and the abortionist comments: "It is very sad such a thing is necessary.... Dear lady you should have a home and many children and a loving husband" (Dos Passos; cited in Eckman 1998: 149). As another example, when a middle-aged woman character (unnamed) advises her daughter to accept that "married life aint all beer and skittles" and return to her violent husband, the daughter refuses: "I wont. I cant help it. I wont go back to the dirty brute" (Dos Passos 2000: 31). In other words, within a single generation the behaviours and the expectations of young women have changed profoundly.

Social isolation, or a feeling of alienation, is often associated with social mobility and rapid social change. It is therefore not surprising to find this issue frequently addressed

in scholarly analyses of Dos Passos' works. For example, Moglen (2007: xvii) notes that Dos Passos shares "the general modernist preoccupation with the alienating effects of advanced capitalism." In *Manhattan Transfer*, Mráz (2007–2008: 68) observes that "most of the characters are /.../ outsiders or downright strangers in Dos Passos's New York." Similarly, Mráz (2007–2008: 69) argues that Dos Passos "construct[s] a novel out of the lives of people who live in the same place but have no real connection with one another." In each of these three examples, we see Dos Passos' profound engagement with the social realities of his characters, coupled with a distinct reservation of any moral judgment.

Given that scholarly interest in Dos Passos has never matched that of his contemporaries, and given that it has apparently declined over the last decades, why revisit his work now? According to Marc Augé, there is real value in revisiting past research. Specifically, he argues that revisiting past research "leads me to discover; in short, to re-read what I have written as if the facts which I observed in former times were only taking on their full meaning today" (Augé 2004: 537). In other words, changes in scholarly perspective after a long period of time can lead to new insights into past materials. In the case of Dos Passos' novel *Manhattan Transfer*, almost a full century has passed since its publication. It is therefore timely to review past scholarship with a view to pursuing a contemporary appreciation of this work.

Another reason for revisiting Dos Passos' work anew is to investigate whether an interdisciplinary approach may lead to additional insights into his work. In the case of works of modernist literature, each work can evidently be studied in terms of its artistic merits. Yet each work can equally be viewed as an artefact of the era in which it was produced. *Manhattan Transfer* was written and published in the early nineteen-twenties and, although a work of fiction, it is nevertheless testament, to some extent, to the realities of the modernist era. As Orwell succinctly states, "Of course a novelist is not obliged to write directly about

contemporary history, but a novelist who simply disregards the major public events of the moment is generally either a fooler or a plain idiot" (Orwell 1957: 10). In this context, it becomes justified to analyse a work of literary modernism as an artefact of its time, drawing upon the perspectives of other disciplines.

The current study proposes to bring an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of the modern urban home in *Manhattan Transfer*. In other words, the literary analysis will be complemented by insights from the social sciences. In return, any findings from Dos Passos' fictionalised representation of home in the early 1920s may provide the social sciences with new insights into the portrayal of home prior to World War II. To this end, the current thesis will analyse the different ways in which the city has been written about during the period of literary modernism (i.e. a literary approach). The thesis will next provide an overview of the treatment of the experiences of *home* and *displacement* within the social sciences. Integrating these approaches, the thesis will provide an in-depth analysis of the extent to which the major characters of *Manhattan Transfer* feel a sense of home in New York City. Based on this analysis, this thesis will synthesise a contemporary definition of the urban home.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing about the city during the period of literary modernism

Esta ciudad me odia, y le gusta verme sufrir. Igual, no dejará que me vaya nunca.
 [This city hates me, and it likes to see me suffer. Equally, it will never let me leave.]
 (El Vecino 2019-2021)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many major cities underwent radical transformation. Part of this transformation involved changes to cities' material and visual forms. As a result of feats of architecture and civil engineering, innovative structures such as the Eiffel Tower and skyscrapers sprang up, bringing a new sense of height to the modern city. Furthermore, new bridges (e.g. Brooklyn Bridge in New York), subways, a growing number of motor vehicles and the establishment of air travel endowed cities with an increased sense of connectivity. Indeed, Moglen (2007: xi) recognises the global connectivity between the metropolises of the 1920s in his denotation of New York as the "gateway between Europe and the United States." Unsurprisingly, urban inhabitants' experience of living in the city also altered dramatically in this period. For example, Britzolakis (2005: 1) notes the "far-reaching reorganization of spatio-temporal experience brought about by changes in transport, energy, urban planning, communication and media." During this period, many cities also experienced a massive growth in urban populations. For example, in the American context, Harding notes that "[b]etween 1880 and 1919 more than 23 million people immigrated to the United States, and of these, seventeen million entered through New York City. By 1910, immigrants in New York made up 41 per cent of the total population" (Lewis; cited in Harding 2003: 22). In other words, the demographic composition of these cities was also radically transformed.

For many, these changes brought exciting new opportunities, and were embraced with enthusiasm. As Moglen (2007: xiii) observes, "[m]any perceived that the burgeoning of advanced capitalism brought benefits: dazzling new technologies, exciting forms of urban

life, access to undreamt of commodities, the expanding promise of social mobility and material prosperity." Indeed, as Orwell points out, the period between 1910 and 1930 was "prosperous" for many, at least in the so-called Allied countries (e.g. Britain and the United States), and the nineteen-twenties "were the golden age of the *rentier*-intellectual" (Orwell 1957: 29).⁴ Many people experienced greater personal freedom during this time than they had previously known. Indeed, a large modern city could be "a site of liberation from the very forces that would seem to crush the individual" (Harding 2003: 13), such as the lack of opportunities often associated with life in small or rural communities. For others, the modern metropolis also provided new opportunities for self-expression and self-realisation: "in the long run, every individual finds somewhere among the varied manifestations of city life the sort of environment in which he expands and feels at ease" (Robert Park, a Chicago sociologist; cited in Eckman 1998: 126).

However, there were also those who found that the expansion of modern cities into metropolises brought major new challenges. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the city's depiction in literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was frequently negative in tone. Whereas previously the city had been characterised as a manifestation of social accomplishment (see, for example, Mumford; cited in Harding 2003: 5), the literary tone of the nineteen-twenties, at least according to Orwell, was "predominantly pessimistic" (Orwell 1957: 28). Ironically, and somewhat irreverently, Orwell attributes this literary pessimism to a level of authorial prosperity in this "exceptionally comfortable epoch" (Orwell 1957: 28-29). In contrast, other scholars attribute the pessimism of literary modernism to the stress of living through tumultuous times:

Fin-de-siècle novelists created their fictional texts at a moment when key social institutions were under particular pressure. They were writing at a moment of significant historical transition. Technological innovations, rapid urbanization, changing patterns of Empire, political realignments, and the destabilization of a range of social institutions all generated particular pressures on the literary

⁴ Orwell is apparently referring to those who were able to profit from, or even exploit, their intellectual output rather than having to supplement their income with non-intellectual pursuits.

imagination of the 1890s. (Shiach 2007)

Although some writers (such as Virginia Woolf, in *Mrs Dalloway*) were open to the positive aspects of city life, in much modern literature, the city was presented in a negative light.

As Shiach (2007) alludes to above, the literature of this time addressed some of the tangible aspects of life in a metropolis, such as new technology and rapid urbanisation. For example, new technology in the form of a car features in the death of Myrtle Wilson, in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, which was first published in 1925 (Fitzgerald 2008: 109). Clearly, this scene illustrates technology in a negative light. The sense of loss associated with rapid urbanisation is also conveyed in *The Great Gatsby*, such as when the original natural landscape of Manhattan Island is contrasted with its urban nature now: "the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors' eyes" (Fitzgerald; cited in Harding 2003: 23). We find a similar passage in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*, in which the old and the new Manhattan are juxtaposed:

'.../ We are caught up Mr. Perry on a great wave whether we will or no, a great wave of expansion and progress. A great deal is going to happen in the next few years. All these mechanical inventions – telephones, electricity, steel bridges, horseless vehicles – they are all leading somewhere. It's up to us to be on the inside, in the forefront of progress... My God! I can't begin to tell you what it will mean....' Poking amid the dry grass and the burdock leaves Mr. Perry had moved something with his stick. He stooped and picked up a triangular skull with a pair of spiral-fluted horns. 'By gad!' he said. 'That must have been a fine ram.' (Dos Passos 2000: 20)

In both these examples, the tangible changes to life in a modern city are presented in a negative way.

Shiach (above) also alludes to the intangible changes which were occurring in the cities of the early twentieth century, and these were likewise reflected in modernist literature. One example of such intangible change was the psychological experience of living through radical urban transformation. As discussed below, this experience has been variously described as one of shock, trauma, grieving, isolation and alienation. For example, Britzolakis (2005: 4) characterises modernity in terms of a "global culture of shock," which she attributes to the "constant assault on the senses" associated with "mass urbanized

existence" (Britzolakis 2005: 1). Similarly, Bradbury (1987: 28) notes the sense of "bewilderment and grimness" evidenced in writings about the city during the modernist era. For example, in the opening chapter of *Manhattan Transfer*, the character Susie Thatcher becomes hysterical in the impersonal maternity ward of a large hospital when she fears that a nurse has given her the wrong baby.

Susie sat up stiff in bed. 'Take it away,' she yelled and fell back in hysterics, letting out continuous frail moaning shrieks.

'O my God!' cried Ed Thatcher, clasping his hands.

'You'd better go away for this evening, Mr Thatcher... She'll quiet down, once you've gone... I'll put the roses in water.'

On the last flight he caught up with a chubby man who was strolling down slowly, rubbing his hands as he went. Their eyes met.

'Everything all right, sir?' asked the chubby man.

'Oh yes, I guess so,' said Thatcher faintly. (Dos Passos 2000: 19)

In this example, Susie's husband, Ed, is left bewildered not only by the intensity of her distress, but also by his own inability to help. Ed's sense of helplessness is exacerbated by his lack of social connections in the impersonal urban setting of New York City; his only social interactions as this difficult time are with a dismissive nurse and a stranger on the hospital staircase.

Similarly, Moglen (2007: xvi) notes that the content of urban writing in the early twentieth century reflects the experience of "vast and systematic forms of social injury," which manifested as a collective artistic expression of grieving:

In the early twentieth century, Americans invented startling new practices for grieving the suffering produced by an economic and social transformation so vast they could hardly grasp its contours. In the expressive arts, those forms of grieving have come to be called modernism. (Moglen 2007: xviii)

In the same vein, Shiach (2007) highlights literary modernism's engagement with the "alienation of modern life and culture." The term alienation is also used by Moglen (2007: xiii) to describe a common theme across the literature of the early twentieth century: "[b]ut millions could also feel that the emerging economic order was inflicting terrible wounds: intensifying economic exploitation, extreme social and material inequality, the betrayal of democracy and, beneath it all, a pervasive feeling of alienation." As can be seen, the general portrayal of the twentieth century city in modernist literature was overwhelmingly negative

in tone.

Whilst many early-twentieth-century writings about the city developed these themes of shock, trauma, grieving, isolation and alienation, some went further still and personified the city. Both Harding and Eckman have noted the appearance of the city as a character in the early twentieth century. For example, Harding (2003: 11) writes that, in this period, "the city rather than its inhabitants became the protagonist" of the urban novel. Writing specifically about Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*, Eckman (1998: 144) observes that the novel "appears at first to have no central characters, other than the city itself." Indeed, the introduction of new characters and the disappearance of old characters throughout the novel indicates that it is not the city's inhabitants, but rather the city itself that is the major character.

The city's character is not seen as benign; instead, it is often described as being actively hostile towards its inhabitants. Britzolakis (2005: 2) attributes this hostile characterisation to the "violently reconfigured relations among urban, national, and global space." As an example, she cites a passage from Ford Madox Ford's novel *Soul of London* in which the reconfigured relations between the city of London and its inhabitants are illustrated in terms of the city's predation upon its citizens: "[London] assimilates and slowly digests /.../ [people], converting them, with the most potent of all juices, into the singular and inevitable product that is the Londoner—that is, in fact, the Modern" (Ford 1995; cited in Britzolakis 2005: 3). Similarly, the opening passage of Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* likens the city of New York to a machine processing its citizens: "men and women press through the manure-smelling wooden tunnel of the ferry-house, crushed and jostling like apples fed down a chute into a press" (Dos Passos 2000: 15). Additionally, Britzolakis (2005: 8) refers to Conrad's description of the city as a "devouring abyss," again highlighting the hostility often attributed to the city in works of literary modernism.

To conclude, we see that writings about the city during the period of literary modernism were frequently pessimistic in tone, with a common focus on the detrimental psychological effects of life in a crowded yet impersonal metropolis. Nevertheless, a subset of writers, such as Orwell, Park and Dos Passos drew attention to the positive aspects of city life, such as improved connectivity and the increased potential for individual freedom and prosperity.

Of home and displacement

One of the marks of Modernism was that it seemed to have no home. (Bradbury 1987: 32)

Until the twentieth century, most people lived their whole life in one place. Consequently, the place in which they felt physically and socially at home was one and the same. However, since the early twentieth century, massive increases in migration have led to more people than ever before experiencing displacement from the place in which they, or their ancestors, were born. Consequently, the traditional patterns of attachment between people and places have been irreversibly disrupted on a global scale. For Baker, this has fundamentally affected the way in which we relate to place. Specifically, Baker (2012: 25) argues that the widespread modern experience of displacement has "weakened the so-called traditional ties to place such as birthplace, hometown, or local community." On a personal level, our concept of home has likewise been deeply affected. As Ashutosh (2020: 908) recently observed, this has led to entirely new ways of thinking about home and belonging. Unsurprisingly, much of the research into the issues of place attachment, home and belonging has been driven by anthropologists, human geographers and social scientists, rather by scholars of literature. However, an interdisciplinary approach, in which a literary analysis draws upon the progress made in these fields and applies it to a work of fiction may yield new and unexpected insights into these complex issues. This is because literature

enables our imaginative engagement with, and appraisal of, situations and issues which extend beyond our own finite personal and professional experience.

One of the key offerings of contemporary social science has been to differentiate the physical and social dimensions of place attachment. This differentiation was commonly expressed by post-World War II immigrants, such as those who left Europe for Australia, Canada and the United States. For example, in a community newspaper editorial by an Estonian immigrant to Australia in the late 1940s, the concept is succinctly expressed as follows: "[a]lthough we are, so-to-say, uprooted from the homeland's soil physically, we are not so spiritually" (Raudma 1949: 3). In other words, one's physical location may not coincide with one's sense of home, or one's place attachment.

Despite this differentiation, both the physical and social dimensions of home remain important. With respect to the physical dimension, Lewicka points out that "the majority of authors agree that /.../ no matter how mobile a person may be, some form of attachment to places is always present in our life" (Lewicka 2008: 211). Similarly, Baker (2012: 23) observes that "every imagined community is 'placed' in some way, as bodies remain, though mobile, situated in one place or another." So too, Grey and O'Toole (2020: 206) assert that "nothing we do is unplaced." In other words, since our physical self is always placed, so too – to a degree – is our sense of home.

Notwithstanding its continued importance, the precise way in which the physical dimension contributes to the concept of home has been extensively rethought over the last few decades. For example, it is now recognised that we may attach to the same place at different scales, such as at the level of "'city district' (from the London Docklands), city (Londoner, New Yorker, etc.), country region (Catalonian, Silesian), country (Polish, British), continent (European, African), or even a 'citizen of the world'" (Lewicka 2008: 212). Indeed, the scale at which physical location may be conceptualised is potentially

infinite. Moreover, Vainikka proposes that our emotional response to a place may vary across these scales: "[t]he ways individuals understand, negotiate and become imbricated with perceivable and conceivable landscapes and real or imagined communities has an effect on the emotional response to different scales" (Vainikka 2016: 19). In the context of a large modern city, this opens up the possibility that one may feel more or less at home in a city depending on the scale at which it is experienced.

Our attachment to places has also been rethought over the last few decades in terms of the physical nature of a place. In 1992 (translated 1995 into English), the anthropologist Marc Augé asserted that there are certain types of place to which we simply cannot attach. At the time, Augé was researching the so-called supermodern cities of the 1980s and 1990s, in which he viewed the concepts of time and space as having become distorted by a sense of "overabundance" (Augé 1995: 30-34). His assertion regarding lack of attachment referred to transitional areas; that is, to places "formed in relation to certain ends (transport, transit, commerce, leisure)" (Augé 1995: 94). To describe these places, Augé (1995: 94) coined the term "non-places," which he defined as being "in opposition to the sociological notion of place, associated by Mauss and a whole ethnological tradition with the idea of a culture localized in time and space." Examples of *non-places* include airports, motorways and supermarkets (Augé 1995: 96). Although such urban environments are generally more neutral than hostile in nature, they may nevertheless generate feelings of alienation due to their impersonal and transitional nature. In turn, this may impede our ability to attach to such places.

On the other hand, Augé revisited the concept of a *non-place* later in his career, and now accepts that the physical nature of a place is less definitive in terms of our attachment than had been assumed. Even *non-places*, he concedes, may be attributed with a sense of meaning. Specifically, he now recognises that "it is the social practices to which a space is

subject which enable it to be defined as a place or a nonplace" (Augé 2004: 547). In this same vein, Ashutosh (2020) argues that transitional spaces, such as airports, may be invested with meaning, especially in the context of global displacement. Specifically examining the case of diaspora communities, Ashutosh (2020: 911) finds that, for diaspora, transitional spaces are where they "come into being." Furthermore, such transitional spaces continue to "regulate ties to the homeland" for contemporary diaspora communities who, unlike post-war migrants, are often able to make return visits to their former home (Ashutosh 2020: 911). From these analyses, we see that the physical dimension may contribute less to our sense of home than had been formerly assumed. Furthermore, we see that the nature of a physical place is not necessarily determinative of our attachment to it. In other words, even an impersonal place may be invested with social meaning. In terms of a contemporary concept of home, this opens up the possibility that a home is not limited in form to that of an inhabitable shelter but instead could take on less conventional and less intuitive forms.

Over the last century, alongside our expanded understanding of the physical dimension of place attachment, we have also extended our understanding of its social dimension or, as Augé (1995: 43) neatly terms it, "the social demarcation of the soil." In particular, we have developed a greater appreciation of the importance of social integration and connectivity to our sense of home. For example, in the applied context of Swedish immigration to the United States, Ostergren emphasises the social dimension of home: "[e]ven when people feel threatened at home and escape boldly across an ocean or a continent to freedom, their purpose is still to re-establish a bounded world in which they can pursue a familiar way of life" (cited in Tuan 1991: 104). In other words, a new home may be established in a different physical location, provided that certain social conditions are met. More recently, in Marino's analysis of user comments on an online community forum for Italians living in London, a user is reported as describing the friendship and trust that

they encounter in the forums as "like being at *home* again!" (cited in Marino 2015: 5). In this case too, changes to the physical dimension do not preclude the development of a sense of home along the social dimension. Indeed, in both examples, it is the social, not the physical dimension of a place which predominately contributes towards the sense of home.

The impression that the social dimension of home is of greater significance than the physical dimension is somewhat counterintuitive. Indeed, the word home has long been a colloquial synonym for one's habitual protective shelter. Nevertheless, the relative importance of its non-physical dimensions is highlighted by the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, who defines home as a multidimensional concept: "[a] unit of space organized mentally and materially to satisfy a people's real and perceived basic biosocial needs and, beyond that, their higher aesthetic-political aspirations" (Tuan 1991: 102). In this definition, the physical dimension of home comprises only one of its eight dimensions: physical, mental, material, biological, social, aesthetic, political and aspirational, and is therefore not of primary importance.

The independence of the physical and social dimensions has been further emphasised by research done into the phenomenon of displacement-in-place. In the case of displacement-in-place, the bond between person and place is altered in the absence of any physical mobility. This generally occurs when a place undergoes a social or political transformation, such as occurs with border changes, colonisation, or gentrification. As Mollett explains, "much displacement does not involve physical movement but takes the form of constraints on livelihoods and cultural practices" (Mollett 2014: 30). Mollett provides a concrete example of "displacement-in-place" in the form of the social dislocation experienced by Garifuna persons in Honduras due to foreign investment and tourism (Mollett 2014: 30). Although Garifuna have lived continuously in Honduras since the early 1800s, their ability to have a meaningful future there is limited (Mollett 2014: 28-29). In this case, the sense of

home has clearly been disturbed along the social dimension, while the physical dimension remains constant.

Although displacement-in-place typically occurs on a large scale, i.e. affecting whole nations or communities at a time, it may also occur on a small scale, such as when an individual undergoes a social transformation. This may occur in the context of social (class) mobility, or when the home's social composition changes (e.g. in the case of divorce). Additionally, although it is usually presented as a social phenomenon, there is no logical reason why displacement-in-place could not also occur when a place undergoes a physical transformation, for example if a place becomes uninhabitable as a result of climate change. Finally, in light of Vainikka's (2016) findings with respect to the impact of scale, it is also conceivable that displacement-in-place may occur on a small scale, such as when a residence is physically altered by a renovation. At any scale, and whether due to a physical or social transformation, what the phenomenon of displacement-in-place highlights is the independence of the physical and social dimensions of our attachment to place, since in all cases, the bond between person and place is altered in the absence of any physical mobility.

Considering current scholarly recognition of the independent physical and social dimensions of home, it is curious that there has been little holistic clarification of the concept itself. Home is clearly of cultural significance, given that it is referred to in idioms such as "home is where the heart is" and "a home away from home." Nevertheless, the meaning of the term remains unclear. Indeed, Huovinen et al. (2017: 24) note that "home is associated with a range of meanings and interpretations." So, too, Perroud (2006: 244; my translation), notes that "contemporary English language literature on international migration is littered with the rarely defined notion of home." Yet, as more and more of the world's population moves around the globe and thus experiences displacement, the time is ripe to develop a contemporary understanding of this fundamental concept, incorporating current knowledge

about its physical and social dimensions.

Feeling at home in *Manhattan Transfer*

It is with this in mind that we may turn to the novel *Manhattan Transfer* as a rich source of insight into the experience of home in a modern urban environment. To begin with, the novel illustrates an environment commonly described as hostile and alienating (i.e., the New York metropolis in the 1920s). Additionally, the title itself (*Manhattan Transfer*) refers to one of the city's main train junctions, thus characterising New York as a place of transit – that is, as a *non-place* – rather than as a place to inhabit. Indeed, the transitional nature of the novel's urban setting is further emphasised by chapter headings such as "Ferryslip" (Dos Passos 2000: 15) and "Revolving Doors" (Dos Passos 2000: 276). This alienating setting has been commented upon by Eckman (1998: 144), who refers to the "absent center" of the novel. Similarly, Mráz finds the city to be depicted as an empty, "vacuous" place in the novel (Mráz 2007–2008: 66), in which the characters have "no home proper," only a "curiously empty concept of a common sphere" (Mráz 2007–2008: 74). When we examine the major characters' sense of home in *Manhattan Transfer*, it is therefore in a physical environment which is apparently not conducive to attachment.

The social factors in *Manhattan Transfer* also complicate the characters' ability to feel at home in New York City. For example, the novel is suffused with characters who have experienced displacement, whether in the form of rural-urban migration, immigration, or displacement-in-place. Furthermore, these characters tend to face their displacement alone, rather than as part of an immigrant or diaspora community (which was more often the case with post-WWII displacement). Although contemporary urban environments differ in many ways from the 1920s metropolis, they also retain many of the above attributes. For this

reason, an analysis of Dos Passos' fictional characters' experience of home in a large modern city may help us to arrive at a more holistic clarification of the concept of home in the contemporary real world.

Both Mráz and Gelfant have previously analysed Dos Passos' depiction of home in *Manhattan Transfer*. Mráz (2007–2008) centres his analysis around the character of Jimmy Herf, who arrives in New York in his late childhood, and examines whether Jimmy, as a social outsider, can feel homesick for the city of New York even whilst living there. This analysis treats home in a negative sense; that is, it examines the absence of home as well as the experience of homesickness. There is clearly still scope, therefore, to analyse Jimmy's experience of home in New York in a positive sense (i.e. beyond his experience of homesickness). Equally, Mráz (2007–2008) does not directly investigate the connection between Jimmy's apparent social dislocation and the physical and social hostility of the New York environment. This is understandable given that, in many ways, the New York that Jimmy inhabits is not remarkably hostile. Upon the death of his mother, when Jimmy is still young, he is cared for by close relatives and, as an adult, his uncle offers him ample opportunities to establish himself financially and socially. Either way, the opportunity remains to analyse the physical and social dimensions of Jimmy's attachment to New York.

Gelfant likewise examines the absence of home in Dos Passos' novels. As a general observation, Gelfant (1961: 133) finds that the protagonists of Dos Passos' works tend to be socially isolated; that is, "dislocated /.../, self-questioning, uncertain, unnerved, and estranged." Moreover, Gelfant (1961: 134) argues that Dos Passos' protagonists are unified by their experience of homelessness: "[h]omelessness is the generic hero's emotional starting point; homelessness shapes the pattern of his life into a quest for self-identity, for stability, and roots." Pessimistically, Gelfant opines that Dos Passos' protagonists

consistently fail to resolve their feelings of dislocation and are thus never able to experience a true sense of belonging.

Because the hero as a child has never belonged to a home, a family, or a country, he can never as a young man have an unquestionable and intuitive sense of belonging. His crucial experiences are of dislocation; his early sense of himself is of an alien or stranger. The residue of his childhood experience lies in his lasting feeling of displacement and his sense of the elusiveness of his own identity. (Gelfant 1961: 134)

As did Mráz (above), Gelfant analyses home in a negative sense; that is, she examines the absence of home as well as the experience of homesickness in Dos Passos' works. As above, this leaves unaddressed any analysis of the characters' experience of home in a positive sense.

Turning to *Manhattan Transfer*, Gelfant perceives (as does Mráz) that Jimmy fails to form a bond with New York across his lifetime. For Gelfant (1961: 135), Jimmy's arrival in New York as a teenager epitomises "the return to a homeland in which the hero has no home." As the Statue of Liberty comes into view from the deck of his passenger ship, Jimmy appears not to recognise the city he last saw as an infant (Dos Passos 2000: 70). Unsurprisingly, Gelfant attributes Jimmy's lack of emotional attachment to New York as an adolescent to his childhood spent abroad: "If he realizes any affinity to the land to which he now returns it is only because he is told, not because he intuitively feels, that it is homeland. 'This is where you were born deary,' his mother tells him; but his relationship to the place of his birth is merely that of a tourist" (Gelfant 1961: 135). By interpreting the text in this way, Gelfant is possibly projecting Dos Passos' own life experience of an itinerant childhood onto his characters (Harding 2003: 18).⁵ According to Gelfant, after having arrived in New York with a predisposition towards social isolation and alienation, Jimmy is subsequently unable to develop a sense of home and attachment there as an adult. Specifically, Gelfant (1961: 139) finds that, as an adult, Jimmy's "actions remain unintegrated and his purposes vague

⁵ Whilst it is reasonable to interpret a text in this way, it does not exhaust the interpretive possibilities. Indeed, as Barthes argues, a text may extend beyond the limits and personal experiences of its author (Barthes 1977: 142-148).

and undefined." Furthermore, Gelfant (1961: 139) characterises Jimmy's decision to leave New York at the end of the novel as an ultimate act of detachment: she refers to him as vagabond, "wandering without destiny into the night." As with the analysis by Mráz, Gelfant addresses Jimmy's absent sense of home, but does not relate it directly to the urban environment in which he lives. This leaves unexplored any effect of the city's hostile physical or social environments on Jimmy's sense of home.

On the other hand, although Mráz (2007–2008) concentrates much of his analysis on the character of Jimmy Herf, he also briefly examines the character of Bud Korpenning and explicitly notes the contribution of the urban environment to Bud's decline. Bud is a young farmer who arrives in New York in search of anonymity, having just killed his violent father. Throughout his short sojourn in New York, Bud suffers from severe isolation and alienation. Even when he receives social overtures from other characters, he retreats from making any personal connections, since he is fearful of his crime being discovered. As Mráz (2007–2008: 68) observes, Bud "has practically no connection whatsoever to any other character." Sadly, Bud's sense of alienation is so complete that he ultimately takes his own life. In terms of a sense of home, it is evident that Bud does not develop any such sense in New York, and Mráz directly connects this finding to the social hostility of the city. Mráz (2007–2008) also draws a more general connection between Dos Passos' characters' lack of intimacy, and their corresponding lack of a sense of home. That is, he attributes the lack of a sense of home to the social hostility of the metropolitan environment.

To conclude, the factors that contribute to the major characters' sense of home in *Manhattan Transfer* remain unclarified by previous studies. There is therefore scope to expand our understanding of this important aspect of modern life by means of a literary analysis of life in the metropolis of New York in the early twentieth century, as portrayed in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. Whereas some scholars have previously analysed the

representation of place attachment and home in the novel, this has largely been limited to that of one character, Jimmy Herf. Additionally, these analyses have concentrated on the absence of home, rather than on an analysis of its positive attributes. Therefore, an examination of the factors which contribute to the characters' sense of home is yet to be attempted. Furthermore, there has been little examination of the connection between the characters' sense of home and the apparent physical and social hostility of life in turn-of-the-century New York. Therefore, this aspect of the novel remains to be analysed. One exception is Mráz's (2007–2008) analysis of Bud's lack of attachment to New York as being related to the social hostility of the city. This finding is significant because it aligns with the social science research presented above, in which the social dimension of home is at least as important as the physical. Hopefully, by exploring the diverse experiences of home in the novel, and by expanding the scope of analysis to include a greater variety of characters, it will be possible to achieve further significant insights into the modern urban experience of home.

METHODOLOGY

Positive criteria

When assessing the major characters' experience of home in *Manhattan Transfer*, it is logical to start with the criteria identified in previous scholarship. As outlined above, previous literary analyses have focused predominately on the negative aspects, or absence of home in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. In contrast, scholars from the fields of social science, anthropology and geography generally attempt to compile positive criteria; that is, observable characteristics associated with the modern sense of home. The characteristics associated with the modern sense of home in the social sciences literature (reviewed above) include: "traditional ties to place" (Baker 2012: 25); differing emotional response to a place at different levels of specificity (Vainikka 2016); the establishment of a "bounded world in which to pursue a familiar way of life" (Ostergren 1988; cited in Tuan 1991: 104); the experience of friendship and trust (Marino 2015); the satisfaction of "real and perceived basic biosocial needs" and the satisfaction of "higher aesthetic-political aspirations" (Tuan 1991: 102).

The current thesis will apply these criteria to the text of *Manhattan Transfer* and identify concrete examples of their occurrence. Since it may also be productive to maintain alertness for new and previously unconsidered factors which nevertheless contribute to an individual character's sense of home, examples of such factors will also be identified. The thesis will then review the above examples in combination with the characters' trajectories throughout the narrative. For the purpose of this study, it will be assumed that a character feels a sense of home when their life experience meets most of the criteria that, in the social science literature, is associated with a sense of home, in combination with a positive life trajectory. Based on this approach, the current thesis aims to gain insights into those factors which most contribute to the characters' feeling of home in the modern metropolis of New

York City in the 1920s. From this, a contemporary definition of the urban home will be synthesised.

Characters

The above criteria will be applied to four major characters from the novel: Bud Korpenning, Congo Jake, Jimmy Herf and Ellen Thatcher. Three of these characters change name over the course of the novel, which can cast a sense of confusion over any analysis. For example, Congo Jake changes his name to Marquis des Coulommiers (Dos Passos 2000: 271) and then, subsequently, Armand Duval. Similarly, Ellen Thatcher changes her name over her lifetime to Ellen, Ellie, Elaine and Helena. Jimmy is variously referred to as Jimmy, James, Herf and Jimps. For consistency and ease of discussion, these characters will therefore be referred to in the current thesis by their initial names (i.e., Bud, Congo, Ellen and Jimmy).

These four identified characters are of particular interest in the context of experiencing home in a modern urban environment because they each experience different forms of displacement. Specifically, Bud experiences displacement in the form of rural-urban migration; Congo experiences displacement in the form of immigration (from France to the United States); Jimmy experiences return migration to New York, a city he left as a young boy; and Ellen, who inhabits a variety of apartments and hotels in New York, experiences displacement-in-place. This diversity of experience ensures that any subsequent discussion of the factors which contribute to place attachment is based on a broad representation of the experience of displacement.

In addition to their diverse experience of displacement, these four characters trace markedly different life trajectories (in terms of happiness and self-fulfilment) over the course of the narrative. Of the four, Bud follows the most negative trajectory, experiencing a great

deal of personal distress and misfortune throughout his brief appearance in the novel. In contrast, Jimmy's and Ellen's trajectories are more ambiguous. Both Jimmy and Ellen develop various relationships with other characters (including with each other), change jobs and residences and even participate in the war. However, whether they each follow a positive or negative life arc is open to interpretation. On the other hand, Congo's trajectory is clearly positive, since he matures from a youthful sailor at the novel's opening to a successfully established New York businessman by its close. As noted above, this thesis will analyse examples from the novel illustrating the positive criteria for a sense of home in the context of each character's narrative trajectory. For example, it may be significant that a character experiences very little sense of home and equally follows a negative trajectory – or vice versa. In this way, it will be possible to draw deeper and more meaningful conclusions about the characters' experience of home in a modern urban environment.

ANALYSIS: THE EXPERIENCE OF HOME IN *MANHATTAN*

TRANSFER

Bud

Bud clearly experiences a weakening of his *traditional ties* to place. Bud is a country person ("born and raised on a farm upstate"), yet his rural ties are broken ("it's years I been thinkin an wantin to come to the city") (Dos Passos 2000: 116). He is introduced to the reader as newly arrived and disoriented in New York City ("Say, friend, how fur is it into the city") (Dos Passos 2000: 15). To his rural eyes, the city appears foreign, even dystopian ("Bud walked down Broadway /.../ past shanties and abandoned squatters' shacks, past gulches heaped with wheelscarred rubbishpiles" (Dos Passos 2000: 33). Nevertheless, for reasons which Dos Passos only later makes clear, Bud cannot return to his rural origins ("Why don't ye go back?' 'I can't go back'") (Dos Passos 2000: 116). Indeed, by the end of Bud's short narrative, he has no ties to any place at all ("Don't matter where I go; cant go nowhere now") (Dos Passos 2000: 119).

With respect to Bud's emotional response to New York, this does not appear to differ according to the level of *place specificity*. Whether outside (e.g. on the street or at a lunch-wagon) or inside (e.g. in a barbershop, or at a men's hostel), his emotional state is consistently tense: "He shuffled his feet uneasily and walked on" (Dos Passos 2000: 33). Likewise, there is little indication that Bud invests social meaning into any place in New York City, other than by his initial desire that it will afford him a place in which to hide.

Following on, we see that Bud is unable to establish a *bounded world* for himself in New York City. In fact, his fear of discovery causes him to maintain a persistently open-ended, unbounded world. That is, he tries to remain "No more'n a needle in a haystack" (Dos Passos 2000: 27). Additionally, Bud's obsession with locating the centre of New York (Dos Passos 2000: 33) prevents him from establishing the parameters of his world. Presumably,

if he were able to locate New York's centre, he might be able to establish a bounded world around it. However, there is no indication that Bud manages to locate such a place.

With respect to the pursuit of a *familiar way of life*, Bud's main strategy is to find work, since he was accustomed to working hard on the farm ("I kin work all right. I'm a good worker") (Dos Passos 2000: 16). However, his attempts are frustrated by his lack of city experience ("I reckon it's as I ain't caught on to city ways yet. I was born an raised on a farm") (Dos Passos 2000: 67); by his lack of union card (Dos Passos 2000: 33); and by his guilty conscience, which causes him to abandon the only regular job he acquires, as a dishwasher (Dos Passos 2000: 49). Thus, in New York City, Bud is unable to pursue his familiar former life (i.e. as a worker). In contrast, there is a moment in Bud's narrative when he fleetingly grasps at the sense of a familiar way of life. This occurs when the sailor Matty buys Bud lunch and a whiskey, and it "made him feel the way he used to feel when he was a kid and got off to go to a baseball game Saturday afternoon" (Dos Passos 2000: 92). Unfortunately, this moment does not endure.

Despite Bud's chronic ill fortune, there are times when he comes close to experiencing *friendship*. For example, Bud shares a moment of companionship with a co-worker when working as a dishwasher ("the Jewish boy handed Bud a cigarette. They stood leaning against the sink") (Dos Passos 2000: 49). Similarly, when the sailor Matty shakes his hand and invites him for a drink, Bud declares their friendship ("Put it there Lap,' he shouted slapping the little man's broad back. 'You and me's friends from now on.'") (Dos Passos 2000: 92). However, in both cases, the experience of friendship is brief, since Bud leaves his dishwashing job, and he does not meet Matty again. Bud therefore cannot be said to have found lasting friendship in New York.

Bud's ability to *trust* people in New York is limited by his guilty conscience ("he found the eyes of a man in a derby hat fixed on him through the window of the watchman's

shelter. He shuffled his feet uneasily and walked on") (Dos Passos 2000: 33). He is also underpaid for hauling coal upstairs by a woman with whom he had established a small personal connection, insofar as they are both country people ("I'm from upstate ma'am,' stammered Bud. /.../ 'Hum... I'm from Buffalo") (Dos Passos 2000: 67). Although the underpayment does not constitute a major betrayal (the woman still feeds him lunch), it nevertheless contributes to the impression that Bud does not experience trust in New York City.

With respect to the question of whether New York City satisfies Bud's *basic needs*, it clearly does not. Bud is always hungry, rarely able to find work, cheated of his pay (Dos Passos 2000: 67), and poverty-stricken ("I'm flat,' said Bud. 'Ain't got a red cent'") (Dos Passos 2000: 92). Indeed, as his roommate in a men's hostel points out, Bud's chances of meeting his own basic needs could be improved simply by leaving New York ("tomorrer me an you'll go upstate an git that roll of bills. Did ye say it was as big as yer head? Then we'll beat it where they cant ketch us") (Dos Passos 2000: 118). It is difficult to attribute any higher aesthetic-political aspirations to Bud, given the dampening effect of his extremely limited life opportunities. Nevertheless, Bud does evidence some aspiration towards material wealth: shortly before taking his own life, Bud reveals his youthful dream of becoming a wealthy New Yorker. As Bud himself recognises, this aspiration remains unfulfilled:

When I was a kid I kept company with ole man Sackett's girl. Her and me used to keep company in the old icehouse down in Sackett's woods an we used to talk about how we'd come to new York City an git rich and now I'm here I cant git work and I cant git over bein sceered. (Dos Passos 2000: 117)

Clearly, New York satisfies neither Bud's basic needs nor his (limited) aspirations.

A factor which is unique to the character of Bud is his life-long experience of extreme and inescapable domestic violence. Indeed, this could be said to be his defining characteristic. As he reveals to his roommate in a men's hostel, Bud suffered severe lacerations to his back from the age of thirteen to twenty-five (his current age) at the hands of a man who was either his real father, or a father-figure:

'Christ Jesus,' whispered the man running a grimy hand with long yellow nails over the mass of white and red deep-gouged scars. 'I ain't never seen nothin' like it.'

'That's what the ole man done to me. For twelve years he licked me when he had a mind to. Used to strip me and take a piece of light chain to my back. They said he was my dad but I know he ain't. I run away when I was thirteen. That was when he ketched me an' began to lick me. I'm twenty-five now.' (Dos Passos 2000: 117)

As a young and poverty-stricken person bound to his so-called father by financial and familial ties, Bud was clearly not able to control the violence which was inflicted upon him. At the age of twenty-five, however, Bud puts an end to his experience of domestic violence by killing the man; in other words, by inflicting violence himself. Bud's killing of his so-called father is the impetus for his flight from his farm to New York. That is, Bud's own act of violence is directly connected to the abrupt and total severance of Bud's traditional ties to the farm, where he has lived for his entire life so far.

As noted in the literature review in the case of post-war immigrants, it is possible to experience a misalignment between one's physical and socio-emotional connection to a place. In Bud's case, his physical departure from the farm is disconnected from his emotional connection. Specifically, he carries the trauma of violence with him from the farm to New York. He is paranoid about the discovery of his crime and sees suspicious detectives everywhere he goes ("I can't git over bein' sceered. There's detectives follow me all round, men in derby-hats with badges under their coats") (Dos Passos 2000: 117-118). Objectively, the likelihood that multiple New York detectives would be tasked with resolving a homicide from a rural district many miles away is negligible. It is far more likely that the threat of discovery exists only in Bud's traumatised imagination. Nevertheless, the continuity of Bud's socio-emotional ties to the violence of the farm is directly connected to his sense of home in New York. As outlined above, his persistent need for anonymity, his constant fearfulness and his distrust – all of which stem from the violence on the farm – impede him from developing any of the factors which could lead to him experiencing a sense of home.

Bud's *trajectory* across the narrative is uniformly negative. On arrival in New York,

he is poor, starving, exhausted, mistrustful and traumatised. His poverty is illustrated by "the frayed sleeves of his coat" and his "broken-visored cap" (Dos Passos 2000: 15) as well as by the length of time he takes to order a frugal meal (he "looked for a long while at the price list") (Dos Passos 2000: 16). His state of starvation can be seen by his "skinny turkey's throat" (Dos Passos 2000: 15). His exhaustion is shown by his "blistered" feet, the fact that he is "leaden-tired" and the fact that he has walked fifteen miles in a single morning on his journey to New York (Dos Passos 2000: 15-16). His mistrustfulness is illustrated by his rejection of the lunch-wagon man's friendly advice that he would have better luck finding work if he had a shave and a haircut and brushed off his suit ("'I kin work alright. I'm a good worker,' growled Bud") (Dos Passos 2000: 16). Finally, his trauma is alluded to when he asks a fellow passenger on the ferry to New York how to get "to the center of things" (Dos Passos 2000: 16) which, as becomes clearer later in the narrative, stems from his desire to escape detection for the violent crime he has recently committed.

Despite some early moments of hope ("when the ferry moved out of the slip, bucking the little slapping scalloped waves of the river he felt something warm and tingling shoot suddenly through all his veins") (Dos Passos 2000: 15), Bud's circumstances in New York do not improve. Although he finds some casual employment, such as hauling coal (Dos Passos 2000: 67) and dishwashing (Dos Passos 2000: 48-49), he does not manage to acquire any fixed occupation. Furthermore, he remains constantly poor, hungry and socially isolated ("Bud stood on the corner of West Broadway and Franklin Street eating peanuts out of a bag. It was noon and his money was all gone") (Dos Passos 2000: 64). When his roommate in a men's hostel offers him an opportunity to cooperate in order to recoup a large sum of cash Bud left behind on the farm, Bud mistrusts the man's intentions and throws himself to his death from a bridge (Dos Passos 2000: 119).

Throughout the narrative, the causation of Bud's negative trajectory in New York

remains persistently ambiguous. From Bud's own point of view, the violence which propelled him to leave the farm has followed him to New York in the form of police detectives everywhere he goes. Yet from the reader's point of view, Bud in fact receives multiple positive overtures from the people of New York which he fails to perceive or value. For example, he is offered advice about having a shave and a haircut to improve his chances of employment (Dos Passos 2000: 16); he is offered advice about acquiring a union card (Dos Passos 2000: 33); he lands a dishwashing job (Dos Passos 2000: 48); he is offered a meal and a drink by Matty (Dos Passos 2000: 92); and sympathetic companionship from his roommate at a men's hostel (Dos Passos 2000: 118). In this context, it can be concluded that New York itself is not inherently hostile towards Bud, despite the misery of his existence there. Instead, it is his learned helplessness in the form of his inability to let go of his emotional ties to his former home (in the form of unresolved trauma from domestic violence) which comprehensively prevents Bud Korpenning from experiencing any sense of home in New York.

Congo

When the character of Congo is first introduced to the reader, he is nostalgic for France ("Maybe I'll go home and visit the little girls of Bordeaux") (Dos Passos 2000: 46). He therefore demonstrates *traditional ties* to a place (i.e. to his homeland). However, these ties are not yet to America ("I'm fed up with it here I tell you") (Dos Passos 2000: 46) and so he is not initially at *home* in New York City. In contrast, by the end of the novel, Congo (as Armand Duval) is comfortably settled in a luxurious Park Avenue apartment (Dos Passos 2000: 341) and no longer mentions France. In other words, he has transferred his ties to New York City.

There is no indication that Congo experiences different emotional responses to New

York at differing levels of *place specificity*, nor that he invests social meaning in impersonal places. On the other hand, Congo does establish a *bounded world* for himself in New York. By mid-life, he owns an upmarket restaurant which is, quite literally, a bounded world owing to its location in a basement (Dos Passos 2000: 270). His social world is also bounded, by lifelong friends (Emile and Jimmy Herf); by family ("this my bruderinlaw's place") (Dos Passos 2000: 271); and by business contacts (e.g. Mr and Mrs Cardinale) (Dos Passos 2000: 287). Congo is also evidently able to pursue a *familiar way of life* in New York City. As a young seaman, Congo provided his friends with contraband goods, such as cigarettes and pornographic postal cards (Dos Passos 2000: 105). In his middle age in New York City, he pursues this familiar way of life by bootlegging alcohol (Dos Passos 2000: 271).

With respect to *friendship* and *trust*, we see that Congo makes lifelong friends in New York. He maintains his friendship with Emile throughout the novel, from running away from France together as youths, to employing Emile as his personal chef (Dos Passos 2000: 342). Congo also sustains a ten-year friendship with Jimmy Herf ("It's ten years now you and me very good frien") (Dos Passos 2000: 342). Regarding the issue of trust, we can infer that, as a bootlegger and proprietor of an illegal restaurant, Congo must trust in his business associates. We also see evidence that he trusts Jimmy in that he offers to lend Jimmy money on the strength of their friendship ("I lend you tousand dollars. In five years even you pay it back. I know you" (Dos Passos 2000: 341). With respect to Congo's *basic needs*, we see that, even as a poor young man, Congo manages to find protective shelter in New York City. For example, in his shared room with Emile, he "pulled off his shoes and socks and trousers and curled up in bed like a cat" (Dos Passos 2000: 46). Unlike Bud, Congo is never hungry. Even when he is out of work, he can afford at least coffee and doughnuts (Dos Passos 2000: 43).

As a young man, Congo does not appear to harbour any higher *aesthetic-political*

aspirations beyond loving "a nice passionate little woman" (Dos Passos 2000: 30). Indeed, from the reader's first introduction to Congo, we learn that he is predominately focused on physical pleasure ("Can't you think of nothing but women?' 'What's the use? Why not?' said Congo") (Dos Passos 2000: 30). Furthermore, Congo does not aspire to material wealth. Instead, he spends his pay and free time on parties ("But I wanted you to come on a swell party.... Faut faire un peu la noce, nom de dieu!...") (Dos Passos 2000: 62), pornography ("Congo produced a package of gold tipped Egyptian Deities. 'Four months' pay,' he slapped his thigh,") and women ("In those goddam Scandinavian ports they come out in boats, big fat blonde women in bumboats....") (Dos Passos 2000: 105). Congo's youthful lack of material aspiration is further emphasised by Dos Passos' frequent contrasting of Congo's carefree lifestyle with the sober habits of his best friend Emile, who works long hours as a waiter and saves his money ("I've saved two hundred dollars. I'm working at Delmonico's") (Dos Passos 2000: 105).

By the age of twenty-three, however, Congo's lifestyle has stabilised, and, to a certain extent, he gains aesthetic-political aspirations. Specifically, he reduces his focus on alcohol ("No use spend a lot o' money 'have a 'headache next day") (Dos Passos 2000: 206) and aspires to become an American citizen (Dos Passos 2000: 207). By his middle age, Congo has come to enjoy the best socio-economic position of all the characters in *Manhattan Transfer*: he is almost a millionaire, drives a Rolls-Royce, lives in a marbled apartment on Park Avenue, and is married to the young and beautiful Nevada ("'Very pretty I show you.' He made curly motions with his fingers round his head. 'Very much blond hair'") (Dos Passos 2000: 342). In other words, Congo has realised his youthful physical aspirations by marrying a beautiful blonde woman. Furthermore, Congo can also be seen, albeit in a limited way, to have realised his higher aesthetic-political aspirations, insofar as marriage to a beautiful blonde woman, a Park Avenue apartment and material wealth represent stereotypical aspects

of American success.

A further *factor which is unique* to the character of Congo is his carefree attitude.⁶ As a young man, Congo is fatalistic about where he lives: "I like it anywhere. It's all the same, in France you are paid badly and live well; here you are paid well and live badly") (Dos Passos 2000: 43). He is also apparently unconcerned about the long-term effects of his reckless lifestyle: when his friend Emile worries that Congo will die young of syphilis, Congo dismisses his concern ("What's it matter?") (Dos Passos 2000: 46). Emile also comments directly on Congo's carefree attitude ("If I was only like that, thought Emile, never worrying about a thing") (Dos Passos 2000: 47). This personality trait remains constant across Congo's lifetime; in his middle age, Congo admonishes Jimmy for overcomplicating his life ("Meester 'Erf, you tink too much") (Dos Passos 2000: 343).

Congo's *trajectory* across the narrative is uniformly positive. Like Bud, he is poor on arrival in New York, and suffered beatings as a child ("a big man not my fader beat me up every day") (Dos Passos 2000: 207). However, unlike Bud, Congo makes lifelong friends in New York, pursues a familiar and lucrative way of life, becomes very wealthy and realises his (limited) personal aspirations. When we combine this observation with the details above, we can conclude that Congo is largely unconcerned about his personal circumstances, yet, ironically, enjoys a positive life trajectory and experiences a sense of home in New York. Notably, the nature of his home is highly traditional: he has a pretty young wife, an established business, a luxury car and apartment and old friends.

Ellen

Ellen is born in New York and maintains a *lifelong tie* to her birth city. In fact, her tie to New York is so strong that she openly declares her love for the city after a day spent

⁶Given Congo's nationality, it seems that Dos Passos has drawn upon the stereotype of the French *laissez-faire* attitude with this characterisation.

walking its streets: "I've been having the time of my life. I haven't had such a good time in years. I've had the whole day all to myself and I walked all the way down from 105th Street to Fifty-ninth through the Park" (Dos Passos 2000: 131). Whilst suffering from her triple grief over Stan Emery's marriage to another woman, his death and her abortion of his unwanted pregnancy, Ellen reactively decides to leave New York ("What wouldn't I give for a chance to get away from New York") (Dos Passos 2000: 236). Nevertheless, she returns after the war, telling Jimmy "I had every intention of coming back" (Dos Passos 2000: 251). Ellen is also intrinsically connected to the people of New York ("She established contact with the audience") and she has a "mysterious occult force that grips the crowds on the street" (Dos Passos 2000: 221). Whilst Bud and Jimmy both search for the "center of things," Ellen manages to access it: "it's exciting isn't it Larry, getting back into the center of things" (Dos Passos 2000: 242). During a job interview for a fashion magazine, Ellen's interviewer recognises that she has a gift for making people feel as though they are "Johnny on the spot in the center of things" (Dos Passos 2000: 330). Evidently, Ellen has strong and enduring ties to New York City as a place and to its people.

Notwithstanding Ellen's tie to New York at a general level, she also shows differing emotional responses to the city at differing levels of *place specificity*. As a young child, she is scared of her own bedroom at night: instead of experiencing a sense of comfort there, she feels hostility ("Behind the bed, out of the window-curtains, out of the closet, from under the table shadows nudged creakily towards her") (Dos Passos 2000: 50). Ellen also feels scared outdoors: when playing an imaginary game in the park, she convinces herself that a man on a nearby bench is a kidnapper and runs away terrified (Dos Passos 2000: 59). In this way, we see that Ellen is not ignorant of the city's potential for danger. Later in her childhood, however, Ellen loses this generalised fearfulness and develops a positive appreciation of New York's modes of transport, such as its ferries, trains, tramcars, taxis and pedestrian

thoroughfares. The importance of transport as an element of New York cannot be overemphasised. Above all, the title of the novel, *Manhattan Transfer*, refers to a train station which serves as a junction point for those arriving in and departing the city. Moreover, Dos Passos eulogises the city's transport in lyrical descriptions such as: "Behind them limousines, roadsters, touring cars, sedans, slithered along the roadway with snaky glint of lights running in two smooth continuous streams" (Dos Passos 2000: 153).

In Ellen's case, transport is the level of specificity at which she responds most positively to New York. For example, as a child, Ellen admires the incoming passenger boats: "Oh look at that big boat.... That's the boat I want to go on" (Dos Passos 2000: 65). Years later, as a nervous bride, Ellen travels to Atlantic City with her new husband, and turns to the train itself to sooth her: "The wheels rumbled in her head, saying Man-hattan Transfer, Man-hattan Trans-fer. Anyway it was a nice long time before Atlantic City. By the time we get to Atlantic City /.../ I'll be feeling gay" (Dos Passos 2000: 111-112). That night (her wedding night), Ellen feels so tense and miserable that she vomits. Afterwards, lying next to her sleeping husband, she turns her thoughts back to the train journey to calm herself down ("The parlour car rumbled cozily in her head; she fell asleep") (Dos Passos 2000: 112). When she leaves her first husband, it is by taxi, and she feels an immediate release of tension once travelling through the city ("She settled herself happily on the dusty buff seat of the taxi, taking deep breaths of the river-smelling morning air") (Dos Passos 2000: 155). Ellen also frequently walks the streets of Manhattan and, as mentioned above, she spends one of the happiest days of her life walking "from 105th Street to Fiftyninth through the Park" (Dos Passos 2000: 131). In each of the above examples, Ellen has a positive emotional reaction to the city at the level of its transport (or, in the case of walking, at the level of her own mobility).

Ellen also often shows a different emotional response to the city depending on

whether she is indoors, where she often appears tense and oppressed, or outdoors, where she tends to feel optimistic and free. For example, during an evening out with Stan Emery, Ellen feels happy outside on the street ("she walked with her stride even to his through the tingling yellow night") (Dos Passos 2000: 143), then miserable indoors in a restaurant ("She had started to drop with a lurching drop like a roller-coaster's into shuddering pits of misery.") (Dos Passos 2000: 144). She then goes outside again and immediately feels better:

Once out on Broadway again she felt very merry. She stood in the middle of the street waiting for an uptown car. An occasional taxi whizzed by her. From the river on the warm wind came the long moan of a steamboat whistle. In the pit insider her thousands of gnomes were building tall brittle glittering towers. (Dos Passos 2000: 144)

Ellen's emotions then change for a fourth time when she returns indoors ("Before the door marked Sunderland a feeling of sick disgust suddenly choked her. She stood a long time her heart pounding with the key poised before the lock.") (Dos Passos 2000: 145). As can be seen, Ellen has strong general ties to New York, as well as a generally positive emotional response to the outdoor spaces of the city and its transport. Nevertheless, Ellen's emotional response to some of the city's indoor spaces – such as restaurants and her own apartment – tends to be negative.

Notwithstanding her preference for the outdoors, Ellen occasionally invests social meaning in indoor places, which tend to be *unconventional or impersonal places*. For example, she seeks refuge in bathrooms at several key points of the narrative when she is distressed. When she learns at a restaurant that Stan Emery (whom she loves) has married someone else, she escapes to the ladies' room to calm her emotions (Dos Passos 2000: 224). Similarly, when overwhelmed by grief and nervous tension upon learning of Stan's death, Ellen again retreats to the bathroom to compose herself. "Ellen runs into the bathroom and slams the door. She sits on the edge of the bathtub pounding on her knees with her clenched fists /.../ Then the tension in her snaps, she feels something draining out of her like water out of a washbasin" (Dos Passos 2000: 236-237). Additionally, although Ellen passes much

of her time in theatres and restaurants – where people traditionally feel uplifted – she herself experiences some of her happiest moments in so-called *non-places*. Indeed, Ellen appears to experience moments of what the philosopher Jane Bennett describes as "enchantment," or a "fleeting return to childlike excitement about life" (Bennett 2001: 5) in these unconventional places. For example, she feels a sense of floating happiness when she and Stan kiss passionately in the foyer of her apartment building:

Ellen gripped his hand hard as they came down the stairs stepping together. In front of the letter-boxes in the shabby hallway he grabbed her suddenly by the shoulders and pressed her head back and kissed her. Hardly breathing they floated down the street toward Broadway. (Dos Passos 2000: 143)

As another example, she feels a sense of exhilaration in an elevator whilst ascending towards a party: "The elevator hums as it soars. She stands looking at herself in the narrow mirror. Suddenly something recklessly gay goes through her." (Dos Passos 2000: 238). As can be seen, Ellen experiences some of her most socially meaningful moments in some of New York's most impersonal places.

Over the years, Ellen changes her New York residence multiple times: from her childhood home to an apartment with her first husband Oglethorpe, thence to the Hotel Brevoort, to her own independent apartment, to an apartment with Jimmy and the baby Martin, and, as the novel closes, presumably to a new residence with George Baldwin. Despite such variation in her physical addresses, her social world is nevertheless highly *bounded*. In other words, Ellen moves within a remarkably closed social circle: when dining with Baldwin, she meets Jimmy; when she spends the night with Stan, it is in Jimmy's apartment; when she discusses her divorce with her lawyer at a restaurant, Harry Goldweiser appears; and when she dances with Harry, Stan and his new wife appear. Despite her many changes of residence then, Ellen nevertheless establishes a bounded social world for herself in New York City.

With respect to the pursuit of a *familiar way of life*, we see that, as a child, Ellen was treasured by her father ("My little girl's name will be Ellen after my mother") (Dos Passos

2000: 21). This treasuring continues into her adult life: Her first husband, Oglethorpe, calls her a "prince's daughter" and does "everything in the world for her" (Dos Passos 2000: 127-128). Other men adore her too, including Stan Emery, George Baldwin, Jimmy Herf and Harry Goldweiser. Another aspect of Ellen's life which remains constant is her love of performance and role-playing. As a child, she dances for her father ("Just look at the child," said Thatcher, still playing. 'She's a regular little balletdancer'") (Dos Passos 2000: 28), she plays imaginary games in the park with a friend (Dos Passos 2000: 58) and even announces that she wants to be a boy (Dos Passos 2000: 32). As an adult, she becomes a professional actress which allows her to perform regularly and play a variety of roles. Furthermore, Ellen also plays roles in her personal life. For example, it is possible to interpret Ellen's marriage at age eighteen (Dos Passos 2000: 240) to the homosexual John "Jojo" Oglethorpe as an immature desire to play the role of wife. In support of this interpretation are the words she repeats on her wedding night ("Oh I want to die") (Dos Passos 2000: 112) which are almost the exact words she once heard her own mother say ("Oh, I wish I'd die") (Dos Passos 2000: 32), as well as Oglethorpe's and her patent unsuitability. Moreover, when Oglethorpe fights with a neighbour (over an unwanted homosexual advance), Ellen behaves in her real life as though she is playing a role: "Then Elaine Oglethorpe made a little bow as if she were taking a curtain-call, said Well good-night everybody, and ducked into her room cool as a cucumber" (Dos Passos 2000: 146). Similarly, when a burglar breaks into the apartment where she is adulterously meeting Stan Emery, she responds to the alarming situation by adopting the role of her current stage character. As another example, when Ellen becomes interested in going to war, she exclaims that she would like to be a red cross nurse, which is more a stereotypical role to fulfil than one she (as an actress) is inherently suited to. Finally, when she considers an editorial role after the war, she speaks of it in a temporary sense as though it were yet another role to play: "Why Jimmy I think it'll be rather fun to have an

editorial job for a while" (Dos Passos 2000: 274). As can be seen from the above examples, Ellen's way of life in New York City throughout the novel follows the familiar patterns of being treasured, performing and role-playing.

In the third section of the novel, when Ellen is under intense pressure from both Harry Goldweiser and George Baldwin, she continues to play the role that they both desire of her (i.e., of a glamorous, supportive woman): however, this role has now solidified into the only one she can play ("the crimson lips that are a mask on her face") (Dos Passos 2000: 243). In this way, she is replicating the desperate unhappiness of her own mother, and thus pursuing, again, a sadly familiar way of life.

In terms of Ellen's *basic needs*, we see that she is never hungry nor homeless. For example, she often dines in restaurants, and when she leaves her husband (Oglethorpe), she has the financial resources to stay in a hotel before finding her own apartment. As to Ellen's higher *aesthetic-political aspirations*, these appear to be wealth and recognition for her performances, both of which she achieves. As a child, she aspires to a wealthy lifestyle: "Oh daddy do hurry up and save a lot of money," and "'You wouldn't like your daddy any better if he were rich would you?' 'Oh yes I would daddy'" (Dos Passos 2000: 65), which she evidently attains:

Ellen sits in a gown of Nilegreen silk in a springy armchair at the end of a long room jingling with talk and twinkle of chandeliers and jewelry, dotted with the bright moving black of evening clothes and silvered colors of women's dresses. (Dos Passos 2000: 169)

Ellen also achieves recognition in New York City for her ability to perform. Early in the novel, she is praised for her acting ("she made a kind of hit in Peach Blossoms. You know one of these tiny exquisite bits everybody makes such a fuss over") (Dos Passos 2000: 127), and by the end of the novel she is a successful actress ("at least you have a career... You like your work, you're enormously successful") (Dos Passos 2000: 240).

Finally, with respect to *friendship* and *trust*, we see that Ellen is offered both in New York City. She trusts her father, who defends her from neighbourly gossip when she is

written about in the newspaper social columns (Dos Passos 2000: 184). She also trusts Milly, who helps her hide a drunken Stan in her dressing room ("Millie you're an angel to clear up all this mess") (Dos Passos 2000: 197). Other characters also trust Ellen. A fellow actress, Cassie, comes to Ellen for advice on her unwanted pregnancy (Dos Passos 2000: 174), and George Baldwin confides in her about his youthful love affair with Nellie McNeil ("Elaine you wont repeat this to anyone... I feel the completest confidence in you") (Dos Passos 2000: 201). Regarding friendship, we see that Ellen openly struggles with female friendship. For example, when Cassie comes to her about her unwanted pregnancy, Ellen is helpful, but feels uncomfortable ("Ellen walked up and down the room with clenched teeth") (Dos Passos 2000: 174). She also remarks to Jimmy that she has no friends ("It's not so easy never to be able to have friends") (Dos Passos 2000: 205). Despite this self-assessment, the reader sees that there are, in fact, many characters with whom Ellen experiences genuine friendship. For example, Baldwin sits waiting for a long time when she is late to meet him ("There aren't many people I'd sit waiting three quarters of an hour for") (Dos Passos 2000: 131). Baldwin also uses his political influence to rescue Ellen from a police raid at Hester Voorhees' dancing studio (Dos Passos 2000: 307). Similarly, Jimmy protects Ellen from her drunken husband when she is caught spending the night with Stan Emery (Dos Passos 2000: 181). Based on these examples, we see that Ellen experiences both friendship and trust in New York City.

A *factor which is unique* to the character of Ellen is her determination not to spend her life playing a supporting role to someone else. That is, she desires control over her own destiny and the opportunity to live her own life. Ellen makes many statements to this effect. For example, she tells George Baldwin that she doesn't want to be "anybody's safety valve" (Dos Passos 2000: 127), that "I dont want to be had by anybody... Cant you understand that a woman wants some freedom?" (Dos Passos 2000: 205), and that "I will not be bullied"

(Dos Passos 2000: 209). Furthermore, when Jimmy admonishes her for not looking after Stan Emery better and discouraging him from drinking, she replies that she is "not his keeper" (Dos Passos 2000: 208). Perhaps because of her determination not to be beholden to anyone, Ellen remains transient in her affections ("I never really love anyone for long") (Dos Passos 2000: 310). A second factor which is particular to Ellen is her adaptiveness, as evidenced by the number of times she changes both her name (from Ellen to Ellie, Elaine and Helena) and her social role (daughter, wife, mother, lover, actor, war volunteer, editor and freelancer).

Ellen's *trajectory* across the narrative can be best described as concave. That is, her life arc is initially positive but then declines towards the end of the novel. In her early, positive phase, she achieves professional recognition as an actress, begins an affair with Stan Emery, divorces her first husband and sets herself up independently in her own apartment. This positive trajectory coincides with her ability to exercise control over her own destiny; at this stage of the narrative, she has personal, professional and financial freedom. In contrast, later in the novel she becomes trapped by the imposed needs of the men in her life (Jimmy, George and Harry).

For example, as a result of Jimmy's unrequited love for her, Ellen retreats into herself and becomes emotionally numb ("a porcelain figure under a bell-glass") (Dos Passos 2000: 272). Under the weight of Harry's attentions, she becomes "helpless, caught like a fly in his sticky trickling sentences") (Dos Passos 2000: 187). Finally, when she decides to marry George, she feels frozen and strangled:

Through dinner she felt a gradual icy coldness stealing through her like novocaine. She had made up her mind. It seemed as if she had set the photograph of herself in her own place, forever frozen into a single gesture. An invisible silk bank of bitterness was tightening round her throat, strangling /.../. (Dos Passos 2000: 335)

Furthermore, as a result of agreeing to marry George, Ellen is symbolically cut off from her home, i.e. the city of New York: "Beyond the shaking glass window of the taxi, like someone

drowning, she saw out of a corner of an eye whirling faces, street lights, zooming nickel glinting wheels" (Dos Passos 2000: 336). In other words, Ellen loses momentum and becomes displaced within the city due to the social upheaval in her life. Her state of displacement is emphasised by Dos Passos' use of the revolving doors motif for Ellen's final appearance in the novel:

As she goes through the shining soundless revolving doors, that spin before her gloved hand touches the glass, there shoots through her a sudden pang of something forgotten. Gloves, purse, vanity case, handkerchief, I have them all. Didn't have an umbrella. What did I forget in the taxi-cab? (Dos Passos 2000: 357)

Although Ellen herself is unable here to identify quite what it is she has lost, from the reader's perspective it is clear that she has lost her sense of connection to New York and is now left to spin and revolve at random, like one of the "apples fed down a chute" in the novel's opening passage (Dos Passos 2000: 15).

Jimmy

As noted by Gelfant, Jimmy doesn't recognise New York upon his arrival there as a child ("Is that way New York?' Jimmy points out over the still water") (Dos Passos 2000: 63). His inability to recognise the famous city is symbolic of Jimmy's weak *traditional ties* to his birthplace. Moreover, although he is warmly welcomed by his New York relatives and, upon the death of his mother, taken into their family and offered a "comfortable home" and "cultured surroundings" (Dos Passos 2000: 114), Jimmy feels no reciprocal connection. Instead, he confesses to his friend Stan that he is afraid of his uncles and aunts (Dos Passos 2000: 164). That is, he feels no traditional ties to the family of his birthplace. As he progresses through adult life, he continues to feel a sense of detachment and discomfort in New York. He feels physically and emotionally uncomfortable in his various apartments ("He lay with seared eyeballs staring at the ceiling, his body glowed in a brittle shivering agony like red-hot metal") (Dos Passos 2000: 179); he lives in temporary accommodation

("I'm just caretaker while he's abroad") (Dos Passos 2000: 178); and when he breaks up with Ellen his new room is nothing more than "a small square bleak room" (Dos Passos 2000: 309). Although he recognises that to arrive in New York by boat is "the greatest sight in the world" (Dos Passos 2000: 251), he nevertheless confesses that "I hate getting home" (Dos Passos 2000: 252). He and Ellen's cramped post-war apartment with baby Martin oppresses them both (Dos Passos 2000: 274) and he projects his feelings onto the city itself ("this rotten town") (Dos Passos 2000: 273). Jimmy does not appear to retain or develop traditional ties to his homeland. Indeed, his most profound connection with the city itself is when he, like Ellen before him, recognises its fundamentally transitional nature ("the end of Manhattan seemed to him like the prow of a barge pushing slowly and evenly down the harbour") (Dos Passos 2000: 224), that is, when he recognises that New York is not a place to which one forms a traditional, static attachment.

Jimmy himself explicitly articulates his lack of traditional ties to New York: "Do you realize that I've lived all my life in this goddam town except four years when I was little and that I was born here and that I'm likely to die here?... I've a great mind to join the navy and see the world" (Dos Passos 2000: 162). In contrast, he is unable to feel the same sense of meaning in a physical place: "He didn't want to go home to bed although the rasping cold wind tore at his neck and chin with sharp ice claws" (Dos Passos 2000: 291). Indeed, he appears blind to the positive possibilities of New York's physical environment, seeing only a void ("the deep gash of Broadway") (Dos Passos 2000: 115) and "As far as he could see the street stretched empty in the rain" (Dos Passos 2000: 215).

With respect to Jimmy's investment of social meaning in *unconventional places*, his investment of social meaning tends not to be to a physical place, but rather to a metaphysical *non-place*, i.e. the past. ("Funny these fits of refuge in the past") (Dos Passos 2000: 291). He reminisces about the happy times he shared with Ellen during their war years in France (Dos

Passos 2000: 290-291) and seeks comfort in the memory of his dead mother ("Suddenly Jimmy wanted terribly to be asleep, not to remember anything, to let his head sink into blackness, as into his mother's lap when he was a kid") (Dos Passos 2000: 311). Equally, he feels energised by fantasies of the future ("he hummed off key as he scraped his chin with the safety razor. Mr. Grover I'm afraid I'm going to have to give up the job after next week. Yes I'm going abroad") (Dos Passos 2000: 161). Nevertheless, in the final pages of the novel, Jimmy finally appears to invest social meaning into a physical *non-place*. Again, it is a place of transit, i.e. a ferry waiting-room. ("He sits smoking happily. He can't seem to remember anything, there is no future but the foggy river and the ferry /.../ He stands with his hat off at the rail and feels the river-wind in his hair") (Dos Passos 2000: 359).

Jimmy's emotional response to New York at different *levels of place specificity* does not appear to vary significantly. Instead, his response is almost uniformly one of impotence and frustration. At a physical level, this sense of impotence is manifested by his inability to enter buildings, and to participate in others' activities. For example, when he is on the cusp of declaring his new love for Ellen, she shuts her door in his face:

"Oh Ellie I want to say something to you..."

The door closed behind her.

Jimmy Herf stood stock still at the foot of the brownstone steps. His temples throbbed. He wanted to break the door down after her. He dropped on his knees and kissed the step where she had stood. (Dos Passos 2000: 241)

Later, when he does marry Ellen and have the baby Martin with her, and is briefly feeling "warm and happy," she asks him to move out of their shared apartment (Dos Passos 2000: 297). On what was supposed to be an exciting foray into the world of bootlegging with his friend Congo, he is locked inside while the others do battle with the competition on the waterfront ("He groped for the front door. It was locked") (Dos Passos 2000: 288). In the mean little apartments he inhabits, he is frequently unable to get warm (Dos Passos 2000: 309) or to sleep (Dos Passos 2000: 160). Figuratively, Jimmy's sense of impotence and frustration may be understood as a metaphor for his inability to connect with the city itself

("And he walks round blocks and blocks looking for the door of the humming tinselwindowed skyscraper, round blocks and blocks and still no door") (Dos Passos 2000: 327).

Jimmy's establishment of a *bounded world* involves a more complex scenario than does that of the other characters. Counterintuitively, the bounded world that Jimmy establishes leaves him on the outside of that world. For example, when his mother dies, his aunt, uncle and cousins (the Merivales) offer him a place in their family and the chance to integrate himself into New York society. To a certain extent, Jimmy accepts their assistance: he stays in regular contact with his relatives, and his uncle finds him work whenever he needs it (Dos Passos 2000: 164). On the other hand, he is prickly with his cousins, fleeing their games as a child when they tease him (Dos Passos 2000: 104), choosing to study at Columbia instead of Yale or Princeton as his uncle would prefer, and rejecting his uncle's offer of a summer internship in his office (Dos Passos 2000: 114). Similarly, when he elects to become a reporter, he initially finds it to be a "swell" career (Dos Passos 2000: 124) but instead of establishing himself inside the bounded world of his newspaper, he soon begins to fantasise about giving up his job and going abroad as a foreign correspondent (Dos Passos 2000: 161) or going to Mexico to make a fortune (Dos Passos 2000: 165). Romantically, he is attached for a long period of time to Ruth Prynne, but they do not develop their relationship. As Jimmy explains to his friend Stan, "don't roll your eyes romantically when you ask about Ruth and me... We're just very good friends" (Dos Passos 2000: 156). In other words, he deliberately keeps himself apart from all the bounded worlds available to him. In a moment of insight, Jimmy's friend Stan taunts him with the label of "black sheep" (Dos Passos 2000: 164). This label rings true, yet the role of social misfit appears to be self-imposed: Jimmy establishes a bounded world *outside of* which he can continue a familiar way of life, that is, the life of the social outsider. The sole instance of Jimmy trying to

establish a bounded world with himself inside it is in his relationship with Ellen. In this case, she cuts him off emotionally ("He felt paralysed like in a nightmare; she was a porcelain figure under a bell-glass") (Dos Passos 2000: 272), asks him to move out of their shared apartment, then divorces him.

With respect to Jimmy's experience of *friendship and trust* in New York, we see that he enjoys many rich and long-lasting friendships. As mentioned above, he has a long-standing friendly relationship with Ruth Prynne. Jimmy's friendship with Stan Emery is close enough for him to confide his fears and ambitions in him (Dos Passos 2000: 162-165), and to lend Stan his apartment for an adulterous rendezvous (Dos Passos 2000: 179). Similarly, Congo and Jimmy enjoy a ten-year friendship during which Congo allows Jimmy to witness his illegal bootlegging operations, provides him with free drinks whenever Jimmy visits his restaurant, and offers to lend Jimmy a substantial amount of money on the strength of their friendship (Dos Passos 2000: 341). Other characters also trust him with their secrets, such as Tony Hunter who shares the secret of his homosexuality with Jimmy (Dos Passos 2000: 212-214). In turn, Jimmy displays friendship and kindness to his destitute uncle Joe Harland, buying him a coffee and a meal and offering him a cigarette when they meet up unexpectedly (Dos Passos 2000: 224-225). As can be seen, Jimmy enjoys a rich variety of friendships and experiences many instances of trust in New York.

Although Jimmy never achieves great wealth in New York, his *basic needs* are nevertheless met. Whilst his accommodation is always frugal and uncomfortable, he is never reduced to sleeping on the street, or in a hostel, like Bud. Similarly, he never runs out of food or cigarettes (unlike his uncle Joe Harland), although his budget does not always stretch to alcohol (Dos Passos 2000: 161). Since his uncle provides him with work whenever he is unemployed (Dos Passos 2000: 164), it appears that his spartan lifestyle is self-imposed, rather than being the result of a lack of means to achieve a higher standard of living.

What is significantly more difficult to identify is whether New York satisfies Jimmy's *higher-level aspirations*. This task is made difficult by Jimmy's own inability to articulate his aspirations throughout much of the novel. Whereas, on the one hand, Jimmy insists that he does have ambitions ("I didnt say I wasn't ambitious") (Dos Passos 2000: 225), on the other hand he struggles to name them ("The trouble with me is I can't decide what I want most, so my motion is circular, helpless and confoundedly discouraging") (Dos Passos 156). His friend Ruth is more perspicacious, observing that "He'll always be a restless sort of person" (Dos Passos 2000: 304).

Nonetheless, Jimmy's ability to recognise his own aspirations develops as he matures. As a sixteen-year-old, he instinctively rejects his uncle's offer of a place in the family company, sensing that it will keep him trapped in a set lifestyle and therefore preclude him from ever achieving his own ambitions (Dos Passos 2000: 115). Later, he cites a desire to leave New York ("I imagine what I want most is to get out of this town") (Dos Passos 2000: 164) and ("I've a great mind to join the navy and see the world") (Dos Passos 2000: 162), yet when he does leave – to go to war – he returns. Jimmy's process of recognition is also complicated by his love for Ellen, which side-lines his other pursuits for much of the novel. Just as he expresses his intent to leave New York, he falls under Ellen's spell (Dos Passos 2000: 166) and it takes him many years to regain his sense of direction. Indeed, it is not until almost the end of the narrative that Jimmy begins to identify his own aspirations more successfully: "I'm beginning to learn a few of the things I don't want") (Dos Passos 2000: 322). And it is not until Ellen serves him with divorce papers (Dos Passos 2000: 342) that he begins to fulfil his ambitions.

Ironically, by allowing him to leave, New York is allowing him to realise his ambitions. This is the case because Jimmy's aspiration is apparently to be at liberty, that is, to be free of all constraints and attachments. He consciously sheds his attachments to place

("In Yonkers I buried my boyhood, in Marseilles with the wind in my face I dumped my calf years into the harbour. Where in New York shall I bury my twenties?") (Dos Passos 2000: 317). He also quits his job (Dos Passos 2000: 315), farewells his friends (Dos Passos 2000: 358) and is absolved of financial responsibility for his child (Dos Passos 2000: 310). After shedding all his connections and responsibilities, Jimmy feels a sense of excitement about the future ("Everything made him bubble with repressed giggles /.../ He'd thrown up his job, he had nothing to do today, tomorrow, next day, day after.") (Dos Passos 2000: 315). Departing his own farewell party, he feels happy, and his thoughts turn to "liberty" (Dos Passos 2000: 358). Once beyond New York, he takes "pleasure in breathing, in the beat of his blood, in the tread of his feet on the pavement" (Dos Passos 2000: 360). In these last three examples, Jimmy also experiences the same "fleeting return to childlike excitement about life" as does Ellen, that is, those moments which Bennett (2001: 5) refers to as moments of "enchantment."

From the above examples, it can likewise be seen that New York allows Jimmy personal liberty, including the freedom to leave. Indeed, when one refers back to Jimmy's earliest childhood (before his life went off track with the death of his mother, the pressure of the Merivales and his love for Ellen), we realise that his ambition for personal liberty was present all along. Specifically, he expresses to his mother his desire to be a "little harbour seal" because "it would be such fun to swim around in the sea whenever you wanted to. They travel thousands of miles without stopping" (Dos Passos 2000: 82). In this counterintuitive manner, we realise that New York does, in fact, enable Jimmy to satisfy his higher-level ambitions by allowing him the opportunity to travel without stopping, to wherever he wants to go.

Jimmy's *unique characteristics* are his inherently independent nature and his need to control his own destiny. These characteristics are most evident in his childhood. For

example, as a young boy, he provides his ailing mother with emotional support ("he patted her hand manfully and smiled") (Dos Passos 2000: 73). In turn, his mother refers to him as a "gentleman" and allows him out alone on the street at night to buy candy (Dos Passos 2000: 75-76). This contrasts with the restrictions placed on his cousins, who are not allowed out at night ("'We're not allowed to go downstairs after dark,' said Maisie severely") (Dos Passos 2000: 104). Jimmy's mother also allows him independence in the form of choosing his own meals in their hotel, which makes him happy ("Hooray meringue glacé") (Dos Passos 2000: 82). In contrast, Jimmy's personal freedoms are restricted in the Merivale's household ("Jimmy Herf sits opposite Uncle Jeff. Each has before him on a blue plate a chop, a baked potato, a little mound of peas and a sprig of parsley") (Dos Passos 2000: 113), which makes him feel miserable and trapped ("Jimmy chokes on a piece of bread, blushes, at last stammers weakly, 'Whatever you say Uncle Jeff'") (Dos Passos 2000: 114). At age sixteen, Jimmy identifies that he wants to control his own destiny and avoid being caught up in the city's cycle of destructiveness; that is, to avoid being "fed in a tape in and out the revolving doors, noon and night and morning, the revolving doors grinding out his years like sausage meat" (Dos Passos 2000: 115). Nevertheless, Jimmy does not find it easy to maintain his independence, nor to extract himself from New York. Indeed, he is miserably stuck for the majority of the novel, effectively being ground out like sausage meat after all ("'O God everything is hellish,' he said aloud") (Dos Passos 2000: 241). It is not until the final pages of the novel that he regains his independence and the control of his own destiny by leaving New York (as outlined above), at which stage he feels happy again.

As far as Jimmy's *trajectory* throughout the novel is concerned, it appears to be the reverse of Ellen's trajectory; that is, Jimmy's trajectory follows a double convex path. Initially, his life goes downhill with the death of his mother and his return to a school at which he was bullied and miserable ("He slams the door behind them, pushes the desk

against it and crawls trembling into bed. He turns over on his face and lies squirming with shame, biting the pillow") (Dos Passos 2000: 95-96). By early adulthood, however, his life has improved: he has a job as a reporter which he enjoys, he has the company of Ruth, Stan and other friends, and he falls in love with Ellen, with whom he eventually gets married and has a child. Later in his adult life, he is frustrated and miserable, particularly when rejected by Ellen. However, his trajectory becomes positive once again in the final stages of the narrative, when he sheds his New York life and takes to the open road.

TOWARDS A CONTEMPORARY DEFINITION OF HOME

To what extent do the major characters feel at home in New York City?

In the case of Bud, we see that his life in New York City encompasses none of the relevant criteria. Bud has weak traditional ties to place, a uniform emotional response to the city across different levels of place specificity and different place types, he remains unable to establish a bounded world for himself, he is unable to pursue a familiar way of life and he experiences no enduring friendship or trust. Furthermore, neither his basic needs nor his higher aesthetic-political aspirations are satisfied in New York. Beyond these factors is his unique factor of experiencing long-term extreme domestic violence. Furthermore, Bud's life trajectory is uniformly negative. We may therefore conclude that Bud does not experience a sense of home in New York; indeed, his only experience of home is its total absence.

Reviewing the stated criteria for the character of Congo, we see that Congo has traditional ties to more than one place (first to France, and then to New York). His emotional response to New York does not differ across different levels of specificity, nor across different place types; he appears equally at ease both indoors (e.g. behind a bar, or in his luxurious apartment) and outdoors (e.g. battling bootleggers). He successfully establishes a bounded world for himself in which he pursues a familiar way of life. Congo also enjoys lifelong friendships and a high degree of interpersonal trust. Both his basic needs and his higher aesthetic-political ambitions (which, admittedly, are limited) are robustly satisfied. In addition to these factors is Congo's unique carefree attitude.

Overall, it is evident that, although as a poor young immigrant, Congo does not initially attach to New York, the life he builds there ultimately meets most of the criteria associated with home. Furthermore, Congo's life trajectory is uniformly positive. We may therefore conclude that Congo consistently feels a sense of home in New York City. As to

the qualitative nature of his experience of home, it could well have been quite unconventional, given his carefree attitude. Yet, ironically, Congo's lack of concern for his own destiny coincides with a very high level of traditional achievement. Consequently, Congo's experience of home in New York is very traditional in nature, centred as it is around his accommodation, work, wife, hospitality and friendships.

By applying the criteria to Ellen, we see that she enjoys strong traditional ties to New York. Interestingly, her emotional response to the city varies across different levels of specificity. Specifically, Ellen's emotional response to the city when outdoors, or when transiting through it, is often positive. In contrast, her response to indoor spaces is more varied. In those intimate spaces that are typically associated with relaxation or pleasure, such as restaurants or her own apartment, Ellen's response tends to be negative. Yet Ellen's response to unconventional or impersonal indoor *non-places*, such as restrooms, foyers and elevators, is often highly positive. Indeed, counterintuitively, some of Ellen's happiest moments are experienced in such *non-places*.

Although Ellen's physical location in New York varies throughout the narrative, she nonetheless lives within a highly bounded social world. Furthermore, Ellen is highly successful at pursuing a familiar way of life throughout the novel; she is always treasured, and she constantly performs. Both Ellen's basic needs and her higher aspirations are met, and she is offered both friendship and trust throughout her life in New York. We can therefore conclude that, over the course of the narrative, Ellen's life generally meets all the stated criteria that together comprise a sense of home. In terms of Ellen's life trajectory across the narrative, it is best described as concave; that is, it seems initially positive, but her level of happiness and self-fulfilment declines towards the novel's end. Ellen can thus be said to feel at home in New York City for most of the novel, other than in its final stages.

In terms of the factors unique to Ellen, the first is her adaptiveness, which she

maintains up until the final stages of the narrative, whereupon it is stifled by her oppressive relationships with Harry Goldweiser and George Baldwin. Although Ellen pursues a familiar way of life (i.e. by performing) throughout the novel, her role in the narrative's final stages becomes fixed; i.e. her sole role is to be the glamorous supportive partner to a powerful man. In other words, her capacity for adaptiveness has been lost. The second factor unique to Ellen is her determination to exercise control over her own destiny. For much of the novel, Ellen achieves this aim. However, in the final stages of the narrative, she loses this control and is subsumed into playing a supporting role in the life of her third husband, George Baldwin.

Unlike the common set of criteria, which, for Ellen, generally remain consistent throughout the narrative, we see that variation in these two unique factors correlates with variation in Ellen's life trajectory. In other words, all else remaining constant, when Ellen loses her capacity for adaptiveness and her sense of control over her own destiny, her life trajectory likewise becomes negative. For Ellen, these two factors therefore appear to be determinative of her sense of home. When these factors are absent, Ellen's feeling of being at home in New York City also disappears; indeed, she could even be said to experience a form of displacement-in-place.

Reviewing the criteria associated with Jimmy's sense of home, we see that he has weak traditional ties to New York and feels instead a continued sense of detachment from the city. Jimmy's emotional response to the city does not appear to vary greatly across different levels of place specificity, nor between indoor and outdoor settings. Indeed, Jimmy's emotional response to New York City could be understood to be more metaphysical than physical, as he tends to invest meaning in metaphysical places, namely the past and the future, rather than in New York as a specific geographical location. Nonetheless, when Jimmy does invest meaning in geographical places, as with Ellen, these tend to be *non-places*.

Counterintuitively, whilst Jimmy does establish a bounded world for himself in New York, he positions himself externally to that world. This unusual approach allows Jimmy to pursue his familiar way of life in New York, that is, as a social misfit. Jimmy enjoys many rich and long-lasting friendships as well as instances of trust in New York. His basic biosocial needs are met, albeit frugally. So, too, is his higher aspiration, namely, to be at liberty, although this does not occur until the very final stage of the narrative. Jimmy's life trajectory traces the opposite path to that of Ellen, in that it is convex. In other words, his life arc is negative upon arrival in New York as a child, but is positive in the final pages of the novel, when he sheds his New York life and takes to the open road. In terms of Jimmy's sense of home, we see that it is at the end of the narrative that he meets most of the stated criteria and enjoys a positive life trajectory. Ironically, then, it is just as Jimmy leaves New York that he finally feels at home there.

As an aside, it is worth noting that previous literary analyses have concluded that Jimmy fails to attach to New York and interpret his departure as a sign of failure. For example, Mráz (2007–2008) equates Jimmy's departure from New York with a "withdrawal from society" and he draws a parallel between Jimmy's departure and Bud's suicide. In contrast, the current thesis demonstrates that Jimmy's life in New York City does in fact meet many of the criteria associated with a sense of home. In this context, his departure is interpreted in this current study as a positive and self-fulfilling experience.

Jimmy's unique factors are his inherently independent nature and his need to control his own destiny. The first of these, i.e. his independent nature, remains constant throughout the narrative. As this factor is not correlated with his trajectory, it therefore does not determine his sense of home. In contrast, Jimmy's assertion of control over his own destiny, i.e. by leaving New York City and taking to the open road, correlates with his life trajectory becoming positive. In Jimmy's case, therefore, and with all other factors remaining constant,

his ability to control his own destiny determines his ability to feel at home.

To sum up, we see the full spectrum of experiences of home across the lives of these four major characters, Bud, Congo, Ellen and Jimmy. In terms of the social science criteria for feeling at home, these largely correlate with the characters' sense of home. For example, Bud generally fails to meet the criteria and, correspondingly, does not feel at home in New York City. Congo, in contrast, generally meets all the criteria and does generally feel at home. Ellen also generally meets the criteria and feels at home for most of the novel. However, variation in her sense of home at the end of the narrative is not accounted for by any corresponding variation in the set of criteria derived from the social sciences. Thus, these criteria are necessary but not sufficient to explain Ellen's sense of home.

For much of the narrative, Jimmy shares with Bud the experience of lacking traditional ties to place, and also the lack of a sense of home. At first glance then, this factor appears to predict a sense of home. However, on closer inspection, we see that Jimmy's traditional ties to place remain absent at the end of the novel (indeed, he abandons New York City), whereas he does begin to feel a sense of home at this stage. Having traditional ties to place is therefore not independently predictive of Jimmy's sense of home. With respect to the other criteria, these are largely met throughout the narrative. Yet, unlike Ellen and Congo, Jimmy does not persistently feel at home. Additionally, as with Ellen and Congo, variation in these criteria is not associated with any corresponding variation in Jimmy's sense of home at the end of the narrative. The stated criteria therefore appear necessary (because they are present when Jimmy does feel at home), but not sufficient to explain his sense of home. This finding also holds as a general conclusion about the set of criteria derived from the social sciences; that is, they appear to be necessary but not sufficient to predict the characters' sense of home in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*.

The contribution of unique factors to the characters' sense of home

The next step towards constructing a more general contemporary definition of home is to examine whether, when each character's unique factor is applied to the other characters, we observe any correlations with those character's sense of home. If so, then the supplementary factors brought to light by this literary analysis may be added to the set of criteria for feeling at home. Ultimately, this may lead to the development of a more comprehensive and nuanced contemporary definition of the urban home (i.e. beyond the novel) than has thus far been possible using real-world studies alone.

Bud's unique factor is his experience of domestic violence at the hands of his father (or father-figure). Domestic violence differs in its nature from the wartime violence presumably experienced by many post-war displaced persons and migrants in that it cannot be euphemised in terms of patriotism, freedom or the like. On the other hand, like wartime violence, its discussion is often repressed or taboo. The overwhelmingly debilitating effect of domestic violence on a person's current and future capacity to thrive is clearly illustrated by the short and miserable life of Bud Korpenning in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. No matter the opportunities presented to him by the city of New York and its inhabitants, Bud is perpetually unable to resolve and move on from the traumatic effects of his violent adolescence. This is a remarkably insightful offering from the author, Dos Passos, and one which risks being overlooked in a novel set in the nineteen-twenties, when wartime violence is the more salient form of societal violence.

The character of Congo also experiences domestic violence as a youth at the hands of his father-figure. Dos Passos does not give the reader enough material to draw any conclusions as to why Congo is able to overcome his violent past and flourish in New York, whereas Bud is doomed to perpetuate the cycle of violence. On the other hand, there is some indication that the passing of time (Congo reaches a greater age than does Bud), as well as

the imposition of physical distance (Congo migrates from France to the USA) may have been ameliorative factors. In terms of the set of criteria for a sense of home, since the two characters who share the experience of domestic violence have opposite experiences of feeling at home in New York City, we can only conclude that this factor on its own is not predictive of feeling a sense of home.

Congo's unique factor is his carefree attitude. This attitude is clearly not shared by Bud. Neither does it seem to be shared by Ellen. When Ellen's life trajectory is at its most positive, i.e. in the early stages of the narrative, she appears more anxious than carefree (for example, Ellen vomits on her wedding night, and clenches her teeth in the face of female friendship.) It is also not shared by Jimmy; his positive life trajectory in the final stages of the narrative appears to be more reckless than carefree. Thus, from *Manhattan Transfer* alone, there is not enough evidence to indicate whether a carefree attitude is a characteristic specific to Congo, or whether it is a factor more generally associated with feeling at home. Further research is needed to ascertain whether this factor independently contributes to one's sense of home.

With respect to adaptiveness, we see that Bud is totally unable to adapt to life in New York City. From his arrival, he imposes his own impossible expectation on the city, namely that he will be able to arrive at its centre. As we understand from the other characters' experience, and from the title of the novel, New York City is a place of movement and transition, rather than a destination in and of itself. Therefore, Bud's search for its centre is doomed from the outset. Moreover, by bringing his past with him to the city, Bud fails to rectify this initial error. Specifically, Bud does not approach his life in New York City with any intent to adapt, but rather as a means of escaping from somewhere else. For this reason, and as he himself observes, he fails to catch on to "city ways" (Dos Passos 2000: 67). Bud's lack of adaptiveness is understandable, given that he is unable to resolve his traumatic past.

Nevertheless, it is a contributory factor to his total absence of a sense of home in New York.

In contrast, Congo and Ellen are both highly adaptive characters, who transform their names and roles to suit the changing nature of their lives in New York. In this way, they do not impose their own fixed expectations on New York, but, instead, they respond to its dynamic and transitional nature. Indeed, it is only when Ellen loses her capacity to adapt and becomes fixed in a particular role that her sense of home in New York diminishes. This insight is summed up by Ellen's remark that "There are lives to be lived if only you didn't care" (Dos Passos 2000: 356); that is, for those who do not impose their own fixed expectations on life.

In Jimmy's case, he spends much of the novel failing to identify the inherent nature of New York (i.e. as a place of movement and transition). Whilst he instinctively recognises the need to avoid being trapped in the revolving doors of his uncle's planned life for him, he does not progress further until the final stages of the narrative. Instead, he is distracted by his career as a journalist, his infatuation with Ellen, and the colourful adventures of his friends. Metaphorically, this is represented by his sense of impotence and frustration as other characters, and even the city itself, close their doors on him. When he finally begins to shed these connections and adapt himself to the life of liberty that he has subconsciously always desired, Jimmy simultaneously recognises the dynamic and transitional nature of New York itself. As detailed above, by freeing himself socially and physically of the city, he finally begins to experience a metaphysical sense of home there.

In terms of the set of criteria for feeling at home in an urban environment, the factor of adaptiveness correlates with a sense of home for all four characters. Of all the criteria examined thus far, this factor is therefore the most clearly determinative of feeling at home in Dos Passos' New York City of the 1920s. It is therefore likely that, more generally, this factor determines feeling at home in a more contemporary urban environment.

In terms of control, Bud does not exert much positive control over his own destiny, other than by violently taking his own and his father's lives. Clearly, neither of these acts enable him to experience any consequent sense of home. On a smaller scale, he does exert some degree of control over his destiny by the act of travelling to New York, by shaving and cutting his hair on arrival, and by briefly gaining employment as a dishwasher. Yet he himself subsequently reverses this control. That is, after travelling to New York in search of a fresh start, he then departs again (by jumping to his death from a bridge). Similarly, when shaving and cutting his hair at the barber's in order to improve his chances of employment, he reads a newspaper article about a youth convicted of homicide and allows this article to catapult him into a spiral of persecution paranoia which then prevents him from finding steady work. Finally, he abandons his dishwashing job almost as soon as he finds it. On a practical level, then, Bud is not effectively able to exert any positive or effective control over his own destiny. In parallel, this reflects his total lack of any sense of home in New York.

In contrast, Congo's life in New York does fulfil the criteria of exercising control over his own destiny. Even though he maintains a carefree attitude and does not appear to focus on controlling his destiny, he nevertheless achieves the same high level of control as do Ellen and Jimmy. For example, when Congo is young, he is subjected to violence by his father, he is conscripted into the French army, and he finds work in New York as a domestic cleaner, which he brands as "filthy" and "woman's work," and for which he does not get paid (Dos Passos 2000: 44). By adulthood, however, he is running his own bootlegging enterprise, he has convinced a blonde American (Nevada) to marry him, and he himself has become an American citizen. In other words, whether consciously or not, he manages to exert control over his own destiny.

As discussed above, Ellen and Jimmy's sense of control over their own destinies varies in accordance with their life trajectories. As with adaptiveness, therefore, this factor

correlates with a sense of home for all four characters. It is therefore also likely that having a sense of control over one's own destiny is determinative of feeling at home in a real-world contemporary urban environment.

As an overall conclusion, we see that the set of criteria for a sense of home derived from social science research is also generally associated with of a sense of home for the major characters in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. Of these criteria, having traditional ties to place is less clearly associated with feeling a sense of home than are the other criteria, and may therefore be removed from the set. Similarly, whilst the characters' response to the city at different levels of specificity raised interesting issues about the qualitative nature of their feeling of home, this factor is not directly correlated with the presence or absence of a sense of home. This factor may therefore also be removed from the set. On the other hand, various supplementary criteria for a sense of home were derived from the literary analysis of *Manhattan Transfer*. Of these, the factors of personal adaptiveness and a sense of control over one's own destiny both correlate with the major characters' sense of feeling at home. On this basis, they can be added to the initial set of criteria.

The refined set of criteria for feeling a sense of home in a contemporary urban setting is therefore as follows: the establishment of a bounded world; the pursuit of a familiar way of life; the experience of friendship and trust; the satisfaction of basic needs; the satisfaction of higher-level aspirations; personal adaptiveness; and a sense of control over one's own destiny. As can be seen, this interdisciplinary study between literature and the social sciences affords us a new, and more comprehensive definition of the real-world contemporary urban home. Moreover, it offers a productive approach for refining a real-world research question based on the study of literature.

An unusual aspect of the sense of home experienced by Ellen and Jimmy which warrants further discussion is their varying sense of home at different levels of specificity. In particular, their mutual tendency to feel at home in New York City's *non-places*. As noted above, Ellen appears to feel most at home in the city's transitional and outdoor spaces, and even to feel moments of *enchantment*, or childlike excitement, in such impersonal spaces as restrooms, foyers and elevators. To a lesser degree, Jimmy feels this same sense of *enchantment* on the street outside his own farewell party, and in the ferry waiting room as he departs New York City. Considering the early research by Augé (above), in which such places were assumed to be anathema to a sense of place attachment, this finding is quite remarkable. As previously observed, Augé revisited his own assumptions later in his career and found that the nature of a physical place was less determinative of our ability to attach than he had formerly argued. Indeed, he could even be said to have reversed his argument by his finding that social practices determine the nature of a physical space, rather than the other way around ("it is the social practices to which a space is subject which enable it to be defined as a place or a nonplace") (Augé 2004: 547). By extension, as noted above, Ashutosh (2020) found that *non-places* (such as airports) could indeed be invested with significant social meaning.

Nevertheless, neither Augé nor Ashutosh went so far as to consider that a *non-place* could be attributed with a sense of home. Whereas both Augé and Ashutosh found that one could attach to a *non-place*, they did not consider that such a place could be attached to in such a profound manner, nor that it would be actively favoured over more traditional places. Yet, in *Manhattan Transfer*, it is precisely in these *non-places* that Ellen – and occasionally Jimmy – appears to feel most at home.

As to why Ellen and Jimmy might feel a sense of home in such unconventional places, it is relevant to remember that it is in these *non-places* that they each tend to reassert

control over their life circumstances. For example, when Ellen kisses Stan in the foyer of her apartment building, she is exerting control over her life circumstances by realising her relationship with someone she loves. As above, Jimmy feels a sense of *enchantment* in the ferry waiting room *non-place* when departing New York City to set out on the open road. Further research is needed to untangle this relationship further; i.e. to identify whether presence in a non-place and a sense of control are independent or co-dependent variables. Do these factors individually determine a sense of home? Or do they co-exist, such that, in an urban setting, it is only in these anonymous *non-places* that we are able to reassert control over our lives? Additionally, further research could clarify the reasons for which this occurs. For example, do these *non-places* serve as a form of buffer, decompression chamber, or release valve to the pressures and pace of city life? Are the transitional spaces of a modern city therefore not neutral spaces at all, but rather perform an active, positive function as places of respite and regeneration?

In the context of identifying aspects of this thesis which remain ripe for further study, it cannot pass without comment that all four of the characters analysed in this thesis (Bud, Congo, Ellen and Jimmy) grow up in a single-parent household. Bud, Congo and Ellen are each raised by their father, or by a father-figure (Ellen's mother disappears in her early childhood) and Jimmy is raised until his early adolescence by his mother. Of the four characters, Bud and Congo are the most traditional, which may be related to their upbringing by a parent of the same sex. That is, they may have looked to this parent as a role-model for their own future development. In contrast, Ellen and Jimmy are each raised by a parent of the opposite sex. They are also each far more unconventional in their life development. From this, we may surmise that Ellen and Jimmy experience less direct childhood role-modelling and thus retain more scope for adaptation and even innovation in their adult lives. Given that

adaptiveness appears to determine one's sense of home in an urban environment, this factor warrants closer attention.

Another gender-related aspect of *Manhattan Transfer* which may benefit from further analysis is the finding that Ellen feels more at home on the streets of New York City than in domestic settings. The gender-related sense of freedom associated with being a *flâneuse*, i.e. of being a female walking the streets of a large modern city, is a theme that has been explored by various other writers, including Virginia Woolf.⁷ However, in *Manhattan Transfer*, we find an American, rather than a European *flâneuse*, in a character created by a male, rather than a female author. Thus, the gender-related aspect of freely walking the streets of the modern metropolis has additional dimensions in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. Although this line of enquiry is beyond the scope of the current thesis, it may nevertheless be a rewarding avenue to pursue from a gender perspective.

Another factor of note is the financial stability that each character experiences in childhood. Both Bud and Congo experience poverty as children, and as adults they are thrown to financial extremes (Bud remains destitute and Congo becomes massively wealthy). In Bud's case, his inability to overcome poverty mirrors his inability to control his own destiny and thus to experience any sense of home in New York. Conversely, Ellen and Jimmy experience financial stability, and even affluence in childhood. Perhaps for this reason, the metaphysical aspects of home (i.e. adaptiveness and a sense of control over their own destiny), rather than the fulfilment of their more basic physical and social needs, are closely correlated to their sense of home. As above, this finding may be a fruitful direction for further research.

⁷ See, for example, *Mrs Dalloway* (Woolf 2000; first published 1925).

CONCLUSION

Although the modern concept of *home* continues to be difficult to define, it is nevertheless possible to explore its treatment in literature, with a view to better appreciating its contemporary real-world meaning. To this end, the characters of Dos Passos' 1925 novel, *Manhattan Transfer*, provide a rich source of material with which to analyse the meaning of *home* in early twentieth-century New York. As has been shown, the radical changes to place, persons and society which occurred at this time enable the characters to reinterpret the concept of *home* far beyond the traditional idea of a socially familiar place of protective shelter.

For the character of Bud, the experience of extreme domestic violence throughout his youth means that, for him, his residence has never been a place of protective shelter, and has therefore never been his home. In Bud's case, his lack of childhood home leads directly to his adult experience of ignorance, poverty, rural-urban migration and, ultimately, suicide. By applying this literary analysis to a real-world setting, we can conclude that the breakdown of a sense of home due to domestic violence can have an overwhelmingly debilitating effect on a person's current and future capacity to thrive, and to experience any sense of home in the future.

More optimistically, the literary analysis of the character of Congo leads us to conclude that certain factors, such as the passing of time, or the imposition of physical distance may have an ameliorative effect on a person's capacity to experience a sense of home after a historical experience of violence. In an applied setting, such as that of immigration policy, or of domestic violence protection programs, we may therefore cautiously conclude, on the basis of this literary analysis, that – given time, the imposition of physical distance, and the opportunity to exert control over one's own destiny – it is not impossible for those persons unfortunate enough to have experienced past violence to begin

to thrive, and even to come to experience a sense of home, no matter where they are subsequently physically located.

Another compelling finding from this literary analysis with real-world application is that the essential elements of *home* may be expanded in a contemporary urban setting to incorporate metaphysical dimensions such as a personal capacity for adaptiveness and a sense of control over one's own destiny. In an applied practical context, we might expect to see these personal characteristics associated with the ability to experience a sense of home across a variety of physical locations. Further review of post-war migration and diaspora studies for the association of these factors in a real-world setting may therefore be informative. Specifically, it would be informative to analyse whether, after experiencing displacement, those who develop the strongest sense of home are also those who adapt themselves to new circumstances, and who feel some sense of control about their destiny, not matter how different – or how hostile – their physical location may be.

Another compelling way in which this literary analysis of *Manhattan Transfer* adds to our contemporary understanding of home is in its recognition that a city's *non-places* (such as restrooms, foyers and elevators) may perform an active, positive function in the characters' lives, as places of respite and regeneration. As noted above, these *non-places* may serve as a form of physical antidote to the pressures and pace of city life. For a real-world application of this insight, one need look no further than the radical global shift in many people's relationship with place as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the context of a pandemic, the terms *shock*, *trauma*, *grieving*, *isolation* and *alienation*, noted above with reference to modern urban life, likewise apply. Moreover, the global restrictions on movement and the widespread transformation of urban residences into all-in-one sites of residence, work, education and recreation may be characterised as a form of displacement-in-place. That is, as the transformation of one's relationship to a physical place in the absence

of any physical mobility.

From an analysis of *Manhattan Transfer*, we would anticipate that, when other avenues of retreat and refuge are unavailable, such as during the pandemic conditions outlined above, then an attachment to *non-places* will manifest. Such places would provide us with a buffer space, in which we would reassert our sense of control over our own destiny, and even find moments of excitement, or *enchantment*. As is already well-known, this is precisely what transpired in many parts of the world during the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, people in cities began to space themselves out along pavements, waiting rooms and foyers, in an effort to maintain physical separation from one another. In this way, urban populations began to utilise their cities' *non-places* to a greater extent than they had before. Furthermore, reports soon emerged of people using the *non-places* in their apartments in novel and significant ways. For example, people clapped or banged pots and pans on their balconies each evening, both in support of healthcare workers, and to alleviate social isolation. In other words, the balcony – a form of *non-place* – was the location where many people found they could reassert a sense of control over their own destiny. Based on this literary analysis, it would also be unsurprising to find (i.e. in further social science research), that the bathrooms, toilets and passageways of urban residences have likewise taken on extra significance during the pandemic. That is, it would be unsurprising to discover that in a pressurised urban environment in which people are experiencing shock and isolation, these domestic *non-places* have emerged as places of respite and regeneration, in which urban dwellers may come to feel a strong sense of home.

This thesis' interdisciplinary analysis of the sense of home in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* indicates that the contemporary experience of home may be defined by a set of criteria incorporating a variety of physical, social and metaphysical dimensions. Of these, two key factors appear to be personal adaptiveness, and a sense of control over one's own

destiny. Additionally, this study finds that, in an urban environment, one may be just as likely to feel at home in unconventional and transitory places (such as restrooms, foyers and elevators) as one is in more traditional places (such as residences or restaurants). Whilst these findings arise from the analysis of a work of literature, they nevertheless have clear real-world implications in such fields as urban planning, architecture and social policy.

With respect to the more general topic of writing about the city, the current thesis shows that the city of New York in the 1920s is not, in fact, characterised by Dos Passos as an inherently hostile environment, as has been assumed in previous literary analyses. Instead, the city is portrayed as a place of dynamic flux and transition, offering numerous positive opportunities to its inhabitants alongside their more negative experiences. For example, the major characters of *Manhattan Transfer* variously experience material wealth (Congo), liberty (Jimmy), professional development (Ellen) and friendship (Congo, Jimmy, Ellen). Furthermore, they enjoy a sense of global connectivity (see Moglen, above) insofar as Congo emigrates from Bordeaux to New York, and Jimmy and Ellen both spend several years in France during World War I. Dos Passos' ability to portray the positive aspects of New York City has, in fact, been commented on by Harding (2003: 133), who finds that Dos Passos captures the energy of Manhattan in "evanescent moments" as well as the beauty of its "lights and colors." Moreover, Harding (2003: 133) draws a parallel between *Manhattan Transfer* and Walt Whitman's *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry* in that both works capture "moments in the life of New York that contained perfection and furnished their part toward eternity," which, again, is clearly positive.

The current thesis illustrates that the literature stemming from the pen of that most insightful of social commentators, John Dos Passos, clearly merits further analysis. Moreover, the decline in scholarly interest in Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* over the past decades represents a lost opportunity to develop new understandings about the modern urban

experience of home, as well as about the more positive aspects of life in an urban environment.

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RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Suzanne Christina Cheetham
2022

Feeling at home in John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*
MA thesis

Kodutunne John Dos Passose romaanis „Manhattan Transfer“
magistritöö

Lehekülgede arv: 80

Magistritöös analüüsitakse kirjanduslikku ja sotsiaalteaduslikku analüüsi integreerides John Dos Passose modernistlikku romaani „Manhattan Transfer“ (1925), et teha kindlaks, mida tähendab kodutunne kaasaegses linnakontekstis.

Sissejuhatus annab ülevaate John Dos Passose eluloost, romaani „Manhattan Transfer“ süžees ja varasematest Dos Passose töid puudutavatest uurimustest. Kirjanduse ülevaade koosneb kolmest alapeatükist. Esimene alapeatükk võrdleb John Dos Passose teoseid teiste modernistlike kirjanike linna käsitlevate töödega. Teises alapeatükis uuritakse sotsiaalteaduslikke lähenemisi kodutunde tekkimisele ning tutvustatakse Augé linliku mittekoha kontseptsiooni ja mõistet pidetus kodus (*displacement-in-place*). Kolmas alapeatükk põhjendab teose „Manhattan Transfer“ kasutamist kodutunde mõistmiseks, tutvustab varasemaid uurimusi, milles käsitletakse Dos Passose kodukäsitlust romaanis „Manhattan Transfer“ ning tuvastab uurimislünga.

Uurimistöö metoodika töötab välja sotsiaalteaduslikel uurimustel põhineva positiivsete kriteeriumite kogumi, mille abil analüüsitakse kodutunde kogemist 1920ndate New Yorgis Dos Passose teoses „Manhattan Transfer“. Neid kriteeriume kasutatakse, et analüüsida nelja peategelase erinevaid koduga seotud kogemusi. Samuti tuuakse välja tekstis esinevate lisategurite seos tegelaste kodutundega. Neist olulisimad näivad olevat isiklik kohanemisvõime ning kontrollitunne oma saatuse üle. Empiiriline analüüs näitab, et linnakeskkonnas võib ennast koduselt tunda mitte ainult traditsioonilistes kohtades (kodu või restoran), vaid ka ebatavalistes ja avalikes läbikäiguruumides (tualetid, fuajeed ja liftid). Neid tähelepanekuid laiendatakse reaalsesse maailma, et uuendada meie praegust arusaama kodu mõistest linnakeskkonnas.

Märksõnad: American literature, literary modernism, interdisciplinary studies, home, writing about the city, Ameerika kirjandus, kirjanduslik modernism, interdistsiplinaarsed uuringud, kodu, linna kohta kirjutama.

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