SINCLAIR LEWIS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THREE MAJOR NOVELS USING A THEMATIC ANALYSIS AS A BASIS FOR INFERENCES ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S PERSONALITY

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.  INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. BODY</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Thematic Analysis of <em>Babbitt</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Descriptive level</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpretive level</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diagnostic level</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Thematic Analysis of <em>Dodsworth</em></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Descriptive level</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpretive level</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diagnostic level</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Thematic Analysis of <em>Main Street</em></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Descriptive level</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpretive level</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diagnostic level</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Lewis Through His Characters</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Comparison of a biography and thematic inferences</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. APPENDIX I</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe a psychological study made of three of Sinclair Lewis' novels in order to draw inferences about Sinclair Lewis' personality. The underlying idea is that a literary creation as a product of the author has a relationship to his personality. This idea stems from the work of such people as Freud who used artistic creation as a basis for the study of personality.

The instrument used here is an adaptation of the Thematic Apperception Test which is used in clinical analysis for the same general purpose. (See Appendix I for a copy of the adapted form.) Bellak (1) has used this method for studying the short stories of Somerset Maugham. He argues that the validity of the procedure lies in the fact that it allows for a complex play of many variables while providing a logical, procedural tightness in proceeding from observable fact to inference. This inference is a one level inference from the creative work to the personality of the author and does not involve the genesis of the personality.

This study involves the interpretation of the novels on
three levels: the descriptive, the interpretive, and the diagnostic. The descriptive level is simply a summary of the plot. The interpretive level deals with the underlying psychological relations among characters in the novel, and the diagnostic level involves clinical inference in which the theme is expressed (or interpreted) in clinical concepts such as basic needs, apperception, conflict, anxiety defense, superego, and ego integration.

Along with the Thematic Apperception Test Adaptation, and its rationale, various sources were used as frameworks in making judgments on material and themes found in the novel. In order to discuss personality deviations from the norm, a model of normal personality was used. Shoben's (9) model of normal personality was selected because he recognizes and uses the concepts of psychoanalytic theory and the contributions of Freud. These concepts are also utilized in the Thematic Apperception Test. Excerpts from Shoben's description of the normal personality are provided below:

The normal person is, first of all, one who has learned that in many situations his greatest satisfaction is gained by foregoing the immediate opportunities for comfort and pleasure in the interest of more remote rewards...This increase in self-control means a lessened need for control by external authority,...and conformity consequently becomes a relatively unimportant issue.... The second characteristic of the nonconformity in the
normal person is that it is undertaken with an essential acceptance of the possible consequences.

The assumption of responsibility for one's notions is one of the attributes of personal integration.

A third characteristic of interpersonal responsibility can be deduced from man's social nature. If interdependence is an essential part of human social life, then the normal person becomes one who can act dependably in relation to others and at the same time acknowledge his need for others. The integratively adjusted individual 'wants to be' himself trustworthy and altruistic in the sense of being dependable and acting out of a genuine concern for the welfare of others as he can best conceive it. The acknowledgment of one's needs for others implies a learned capacity for forming and maintaining intimate interpersonal relationships. One suspects that the origins of this ability lie in the long experience during childhood of having needs gratifications frequently associated with the presence of another person typically a parent figure. But this association and the process of generalization, one comes to attach a positive affect to others. If he is required to demonstrate this mutuality too soon he is likely to form the schema that interpersonal relationships are essentially matters of traded favors and that instead of basic trust, the proper attitude is one of getting as much as possible while giving no more than necessary.

It seems reasonable to expect the positively developed person to behave in such a fashion as to contribute, according to his own particular lights, to the general welfare of humanity, to take as his frame of reference mankind at large as best he understands it rather than his own group or clan. Democracy in psychological terms implies only a concern about others, a valuing of persons above things, and a willingness to participate in mutually gratifying relationships with many categories of persons, including those of which one has only vicarious knowledge. The normal person has ideals and standards that he tries to live up to even though they often exceed his grasp. Guilt becomes a challenge to his honesty, especially with himself but also with others; and it signalizes for him the desirability
of modifying his behavior, or greater effort to give up to his ideals, rather than the need to defend himself by such mechanisms as rationalization or projection.

In order to interpret the findings in the light of human needs, a list of basic human needs was employed. The list developed by Murray (7) was used because the TAT's original focus was on the motivational aspects of need as Murray defined them. Murray's list includes abasement, achievement, acquisition, affiliation, aggression, autonomy, blamavoidance, counteraction, cognizance, construction, deference, defendance, dominance, exhibition, exposition, harmavoidance, infavoidance, nuturance, order, play, refection, retention, sentience, sex, succorance, superiority, and understanding.

The interpretations of defenses are based on Coleman (2), who also acknowledges his indebtedness to the concepts of Freud. The defenses he discusses are denial of reality, fantasy, compensation, identification, introjection, projection, rationalization, repression, reaction formation, displacement, emotional insulation, isolation, regression, sublimation, and undoing. These include the defenses which are listed on Bellak's TAT form.

The source of interpretation of conflict was based on Erik Erikson (6). Erikson was chosen as a source because he also employs Freudian concepts of psychoanalysis in his formulations.
Bellak's description of his analysis of Somerset Maugham's short stories was used as a general guide for the analysis of Lewis' novels. Lewis was chosen because the present writer had no previous knowledge of the novels or of the novelist's life.

The three novels chosen for this study were Babbitt (3), Mainstreet (5), and Dodsworth (4). They were selected because they are considered to be among Lewis' major novels, and the general theme in the three of them is similar. They all seem to deal with a particular person's relation to the forces of society in general. Other major novels such as Elmer Gantry and Arrowsmith deal with the more specific areas of religion and science, thus narrowing their possibilities for general interpretation.

The general procedure followed was the analysis of the main character in each of the three novels by means of using Bellak's TAT form. Each was then interpreted and summarized in turn and inferences made about Lewis. Each of these were put together to locate the strongest, recurring themes, upon which the final inferences about Lewis were based. These inferences were then checked against Schorer's biography of Lewis (8).

**Thematic Analysis of Babbitt**

**Descriptive Level (The Main Theme) --** Babbitt, a dissatisfied, midwestern realtor, longed for a better social position. His
striving for a better position was not made easier by his unhappiness with his family. Babbitt openly courts society and is rebuffed. He finds diversion in a camping trip with his closest friend. The support he finds in his friend is cut off when the friend shoots his wife and is sent to prison. Babbitt's dissatisfaction leads him to an involvement with another woman and in labor problems. These incidents cause him to neglect old friends and this hurts his business. He seems almost cut off from his former position when his wife becomes ill. This brings him back to her, his friends, and the conforming life.

Interpretive Level --. The personality with a strong superego and id that possesses a weak ego may be unable to function adequately in society when the rigid controls of the superego are tested. He relies on defensive reactions to maintain the ego strength. The ego may reassert itself when a strong reality such as illness again coordinates the superego and the ego's perception of reality.

Diagnostic Level --. Babbitt is a 46-year-old male realtor. He likes to play golf and view movies of girls, cowboys, and comedians. His main ability seems to be public speaking. He is steady, diligent, honest, opinionated and loud. He is vigorous in advocacy of policies if not in practice. He has lost interest in the probable adventures of each day. He sees himself in a favorable light. He considers his forehead as
enormous instead of balding. In his view, glasses give him the look of a modern businessman and his head looks weighty instead of babyish. He feels that his strong chin is the mark of a solid citizen; but even with his distorted self perception, he knows that he cannot make himself young.

Babbitt's actions show that he had a need for superiority. When he views the rich Mrs. McKelvey in her Pullman car, he stands still and is conscious of a cold feeling of insignificance in his heart. Babbitt also exemplifies a need for sex, or intimacy as conceptualized by Erikson. He lacks this in his marriage, and the need is pointed up in his drunken trip to the red light district:

As they were borne toward the red lights and the violent automatic pianos and the stocky women who simpered, Babbitt was frightened. He wanted to leap from the taxicab, but all his body was a murky fire, and he groaned. Too late to quit now, and he knew he did not want to quit. (3 p. 144)

Babbitt also lacked a sense of identity or affiliation. He asked "What was it all about? What did he want." (3 p. 221), while he kept joining groups and playing the part of the booster.

"'Booster Pep!' It made Babbitt feel loyal and important. It associated him with Good Fellows, with men who were nice and human, and important in business circles."(3 p. 12) It also seems that Babbitt showed a need for autonomy. He shied away from relations where he was dominated. His relation with Tanis
was smooth until she started dominating him. Then he broke it off.

Other circumstances introduced in the novel point up Babbitt's needs more specifically. The unsatisfying relationship with his wife and his affair with Tanis show that a conflict exists in Babbitt. He desires intimacy but is unable to enjoy it; possibly because of his lack of identity. His surprising political switch shows his need for autonomy as he resented being pressured by his acquaintances. His camping trip with Paul, his dream, and his joining clubs all are defensive mechanisms indicating Babbitt's need for ego protection against the desires of his id and superego. The camping trip is a withdrawal from a demanding situation much the same as a regression to a more primitive level of behavior. In this setting, Babbitt can more easily satisfy his superego by lowered aspirations. Babbitt's dream is a fantasy which gratifies his frustrated sexual desires in a substitute manner, because his superego won't allow this in reality. The fact that Babbitt is a "joiner" emphasizes his need to satisfy his superego by feelings of adequacy. He does this by identifying with clubs and people whom he sees as adequate and by doing this he assumes their success as part of his self structure.

Another important incident is Babbitt's brief try to get into society. The attempt indicates the need for superiority
and the brevity of the attempt again indicates a weak ego that was unable to pick appropriate channels for action and was unable to delay the action until the appropriate time.

Omissions also indicate much about the Babbitt personality. The need for autonomy is supported by lack of his seeking objects upon which to be dependent. There is also a lack of long range plans, and much expression of aggression. This again indicates a weak ego that is unable to formulate plans for the satisfaction of needs, to test plans, or to wait until appropriate means of releasing tension are found.

Another significant omission is the lack of discussion of his parents; especially the father. Possibly a strong superego has so internalized the control from the parents, that they are no longer consciously necessary to Babbitt. The even more obvious slighting of the father except for two references which indicate that Babbitt was more successful, may indicate that Babbitt had failed to pass successfully through the Oedipal stage of development. He says, "My dad was a pretty good old coot, but he never had much style to him, and I had to work darn hard to earn my way through college." (3 p. 73) This may also indicate another possible reason for his unsuccessful relations with women as he may still perceive his mother as an appropriate love object.
Babbitt viewed the world in two ways. He sees it as restricting, especially the world that contained women: "They were on the New York express, incredibly bound for Maine, incredibly without their families, they were free in a man's world, in the smoking compartment of the Pullman." (3, p. 115) His other conception of the world was material: "He had enormous and poetic admiration, though very little understanding, of all mechanical devices. They were his symbols of truth and beauty." (3, p. 58)

As far as Babbitt's relations to others; not enough is said about the parents to make specific statements, but this fact in itself leaves much room for inferences. "Babbitt loved his mother, and sometimes he rather liked her, but he was annoyed by her Christian Patience, and he was reduced to pulpiness when she discoursed about a quite mythical hero called 'your father'." (3 p. 188) "It was a room as superior in comfort to the 'parlor' of Babbitt's boyhood as his motor was superior to his father's buggy." (3, p. 78) These two excerpts seem to indicate that Babbitt had a strong preference for his mother and felt himself in competition with his father.

With his contemporaries, Babbitt has several relationships. He was a big brother to Paul, distant to his wife, and a masculine "show off" for Tanis, in much the way an adolescent boy tries to impress a girl friend.
Babbitt was not close to his children and tried to get his son to do what he felt his son should do regardless of what Ted had planned. It seems that he was extending himself in Ted. With the minor figures in the book, Babbitt reacted mechanically in what he considered the acceptable and proper manner.

Conflict is quite evident in Babbitt's life. He is inhibited by a strong superego and at the same time desires intimacy. For example,

... he did know that he wanted the presence of Paul Riesling; and from that he stumbled into the admission that he wanted the fairy girl - in the flesh. If there had been a woman whom he loved, he would have fled to her, humbled his forehead on her knees ... As he fell asleep on the davenport he felt that he found something in life, and that he made a terrifying, thrilling break with everything that was decent and normal ... He had forgotten the next morning, that he was a conscious rebel. (3, p. 221)

Babbitt has two anxieties and these are of being overpowered, which seems to support his need for superiority and of being helpless, which indicates his need for autonomy.

"Babbitt did not often squabble with his employees. He liked to like the people about him. He was dismayed when they did not like him." (3, p. 61) This shows how great his fear of disapproval was. His fear of helplessness is shown here: "The independence seeped out of him and he walked the streets alone, afraid of men's cynical eyes and the incessant hiss of whispering." (3, p. 303)
Because his superego was strong he believed that being immoral was not worth the price of violating his internalized social standards. His self control is strong and his ego is unable to keep the balance between the needs of the id and his strong superego. As a substitute for parental control, it seems that the severity of the superego indicates very righteous parents who demanded exact obedience and a strong attachment to them.

Babbitt doesn't need to be dependent on outside behavior controls because his superego and internal standards are doing their jobs too well. This strong superego is also blocking Babbitt's attempts for intimacy.

The ego is weakly integrated in Babbitt. It is unable to formulate plans which are acceptable to the id, superego, and the external world. The ego's intellectual functions are surface deep and the ego doesn't recognize appropriate objects for release of tension — witness the pursuit of the McKelveys and of Tanis as a love object. The only thing that is able to keep the ever weakening ego in precarious balance is the wife's illness. The superego sees this as a social obligation. Ideally man is to protect his frail wife. The ego sees this reality and is able to direct appropriate behavior because the behavior corresponds with the superego's ideal.
Babbitt's defensive reactions show more about his personality. By the use of fantasy he indicates that he had unfulfilled desires. In the case of his dream (described below) these desires are sexual.

For years the fairy child had come to him. Where others saw but Georgie Babbitt, she discerned gallant youth. She waited for him, in the darkness beyond mysterious groves. When at last he could slip away from the crowded house he darted to her. His wife, his clamoring friends sought to follow, but he escaped, the girl fleet beside him, and they crouched together on a shadowy hillside. He was gay and valiant, that she would wait for him, that they would sail. (3, p. 6)

He is able to express this desire in dreams while the superego is "off guard". It is also obvious that the personality with a strong superego would adopt introjection as a means of strength. For example, "The kernel of his practical religion was that it was respectable, and beneficial to one's business, to be seen going to services; that the church kept the worst elements from being still worse." (3, p. 170) The problem here is that with a weak ego Babbitt is unable to do this on an intellectual level.

Rationalization protects the adequacy of the personality who has the need for superiority. After Babbitt has been rejected by the socially prominent McKelvey's he explains away the hurt to his pride. "Lucile McKelvey can't pull anything on me! Her folks are common mud, even if her husband and her dad are millionaires!" (3, p. 13)

The strong superego shows up again in Babbitt's use of
reaction formation. Obstacles and barriers defend the super-
ego from the desires of the id, because the ego is incapable.

But even Babbitt's self-made barriers weren't strong enough:

Babbitt disapproved of Mr. and Mrs. Doppelbrau as 'Bohemian.' From their house came midnight music and obscene laughter; there were neighborhood rumors of bootlegged whisky and fast motor rides. They furnished Babbitt with many a happy evenings of discussion, during which he announced, firmly, I'm not straight-laced, and I don't mind seeing a fellow throw in a drink once in a while, but when it comes to deliberately trying to get away with a lot of hell-raising all the while like the Doppelbraus do, it's too rich for my blood. (3, p. 23)

With the assistance of Tanis's Bunch, the Doppelbraus, and other companions in forgetfulness, there was not an evening for two weeks when he did not return home late and shaky. (3, p. 273)

Repression is another defensive reaction by means of which painful or dangerous desires are excluded from consciousness.

In a mild sense Babbitt found strength in this device: "Babbitt's excursion was never known to his family, nor to anyone in Zenith save Rogers and Wing. It was not officially recognized even by himself." (3, p. 145)

Babbitt is able to satisfy some of his needs vicariously through identification: "His clubs and associations were food comfortable to his spirit." (3, p. 166) And as a final means of defensive reaction, Babbitt slipped into regression to save the ego that could not cope with the conflicts it faced.
Babbitt looked up irritable from the comic strips in the 'Evening Advocate'. They composed his favorite literature and art... With the solemn face of a devotee, breathing heavily through his open mouth, he plodded lightly through every picture, and during the rite he detested interruptions. (3, p.64)

**Thematic Analysis of Dodsworth**

**Descriptive Level (Main Theme) --.** Dodsworth, a retired corporation president, takes his pretty wife to Europe for an extended trip. He would have been content to sight-see, but she is determined to join European society. After she becomes involved in one love affair, he tries unsuccessfully to get her to go home with him. After a short trip home he rejoins her, but their marriage is being destroyed by her affair with a German. Dodsworth begins his own affair with an American widow. He leaves this woman when his wife, who has been jilted, is ready to go home. He gets as far as New York with his wife, sees the marriage is indeed over, and returns to Europe to the American widow.

**Interpretive Level --.** A man, who has buried the desires of the id in work, retires and goes to Europe. The superego is now unable to control the id, lacking former devices; because, the ego is weak. The personality begins to search for protection complicated by strong needs for intimacy and autonomy. The problem is resolved when a new character which satisfies the
desires of the id and the aspirations of the superego is found, thus reducing the necessity for a strong ego.

**Diagnostic Level**. Dodsworth is a 50 year old retired corporation president, whose main ability was designing cars. His interests centered around his work which he saw as adventurous. Outside of work he liked Drieser, Cabell, and Proust along with golf, camping, whisky, and poker. (4, p. 13) He was not active in civic affairs; instead, he liked to be alone to meditate. His appearance was that of a tall, well-built man, but he looked older than he was and he also looked tired. Dodsworth sees himself as part of "a crowd vigorously pushing one another toward nowhere." (4, p. 121)

Dodsworth's trip to Europe pointed up a need of which he himself had not been conscious. This was a need for affiliation as exemplified in this description of an English home:

If in his quest for romance, the exterior of the house was a jar to Sam, the drawing room was precisely what he had desired, without knowing that he had desired it. Here was definitely home with a homeliness which existed no longer in most of the well-to-do houses of Zenith. (4, p. 78)

Other circumstances introduced in the novel point up Dodsworth's needs in other ways. For example, the unsatisfying relationship with his wife:

Good God, had he really become confirmed, since the case of Arnold Israel, in this habit of seeing Fran
not as his loyal companion but as a dreaded and admired enemy, to placate whom was his object in life? Was this the truth about his wanderings, all his future? (4, p. 273)

And his questioning of life and himself: "Good Lord, are all of us here in America getting so we can't be happy, can't talk, till we've had a lot of cocktails? What's the matter with our lives?" (4, p. 200) shows his needs for intimacy and identification.

Sam's need for intimacy was deeper than a simple need for sex. He found a willing partner for his desires in Nande Azeredo: "Then he returned to his hotel, packed a bag, and spent three nights and days in the flat of Nande Azeredo." (4, p. 357) But this did not satisfy him and he soon left Nande. Sam had a need for approval that interfered with the satisfaction of his other needs: "But to face the derision that would be his if he came back without Fran...that he could not endure." (4, p. 352)

Obvious omissions in the novel also indicate much about Dodsworth and his personality. There is not made at any time in this novel any mention of Dodsworth's parents. He functions entirely on his own in this sense, and seems to lack nothing. If this is the case it possibly shows a need for autonomy. Dodsworth seeks no advice from others. The parents are not necessary to him as a means of control. All his standards for behavior are completely internalized. Since no mention of
parents is made at all, and this is unnatural, it could be possible that all memory of these people have been repressed and not allowed to function on the conscious level.

Another omission in the life of Dodsworth is long range plans. Dodsworth is unable to formulate any plans for the future, either for business or in his personal life. This would tend to indicate a weak ego that is unable to formulate long range plans for action.

Dodsworth had a view of the world as menacing:

The heat was churning up into a thunderstorm. Lightning revealed the cornices of the inhumanly lofty buildings. The whole air was menacing, yet he felt the menace indifferently, and heavily he said goodnight to Ross Ireland. The storm exploded as he stood at the window of his hotel room. Every lightning flash threw into manical high relief the vast yellow wall of the building opposite, and its innumerable glaring windows; and in the darknesses between flashes he could imagine the building crashing over on him. It was as terrifying as a volcanic erruption even to Sam Dodsworth, who was not greatly given to fear. (4, p. 185)

He felt insignificant at sea and unnecessary when he viewed the foreign cities.

Dodsworth's relations with others are many and varied. There is, of course, no known relationship with his parents. His relationship with Fran was frustrating:

She could make him feel so unintelligent that he would be silent all evening. The easy self-confidence which weeks of industrial triumphs had built up in him she could flatten in five seconds. She was, in fact, a genius at planting in him an assurance of his inferiority. (4, p. 29)
Tub is representative of Dodsworth's relationship with most of the people he knew: "They had been together since boyhood. Each was a habit to the other....They analyzed each other, they considered each other as individuals no more than a man considers the virtues of his own several toes, unless they hurt." (4, p. 210)

Edith Cortright, the widow for whom Dodsworth leaves Fran, does much for him: "But that was to him a lesser hint of what Edith Cortright had done to him than his increase in self-confidence." (4, p. 399)

The minor or junior figures in the book give more depth to Dodsworth. With Ross Ireland, the journalist, Dodsworth has a satisfying relationship:

He had not known that wandering could be so satisfying as it was with Ross Ireland, who never complained and became superior like Fran, or felt bound to be funny like Tub, or noisy like Nande; who was interested in everything from pig-pens to cloister; and who enjoyed erecting theories of life more than anything save tearing them down. (4, p. 362)

Here Dodsworth can find strength in a dynamic personality that accepts him fully.

Dodsworth was close to his children as long as they needed him. He liked having them be dependent upon him: "She was not his rollicking helpless girl. She was a competent Young Matron. 'She doesn't need me any more.' signed Sam." (4, p. 205)
Conflict is apparent in the life of Dodsworth. He feels restrained:

He was chained by every friend who had made life agreeable—bound not to shock or lose them. He was chained by every dollar he had made, every automobile he had manufactured—they meant a duty to his caste. He was chained by every hour he had worked—they had left him stiff, spiritually rheumatic. He still wanted the world...but there was nothing specific in the world that he wanted so much as, thirty years ago, he had wanted to be a Richard Harding Davis hero. (4, p. 192)

His need for autonomy is strong and is opposed in two directions—work and Fran:

The vision of himself as a Richard Harding Davis hero returned wistfully....Riding a mountain trail, two thousand sheer feet above a steaming valley; sun-helmet and whipcord breeches; tropical rain on a tin-roofed shack; a shot in the darkness as he sat over a square-face of gin with a ragged tramp of Noble Ancestry. But his mind fled back to the excitement of Fran's image; her spun-glass hair, her tingling hands, her lips that were forever pursing in fantastic pouts, her chatter that fell suddenly into inexplicable silence, her cool sureness that made him feel foggy and lumbering. (4, p. 10)

He cannot be independent from work without conflict because work gives him identity. He also feels conflict because Fran constantly defeats his attempts at both autonomy and identity. Yet he sees her as the only source of intimacy until she forces him to become more autonomous through her affairs: "'Oh, a fellow's got to be loyal to his wife, and not go getting mixed up in a lot of complications.' But just now he seemed insufficiently afraid of 'getting mixed up.'" (4, p. 284)
Dodsworth's anxieties follow his needs. He is miserable at the thought of loss of identity:

But whatever discomfort he had at playing hobbledehoy, in the class reunion Sam found balm. They knew who he was! No one in Paris (except Fran, at times) knew that. But his classmates realized that he was Sambo Dodsworth, great tackle, Skull and Bones, creative engineer, president of a corporation, 'prince of good fellows.' (4, p. 201)

He also has a dread of becoming dependent on others.

In the taxicab, he had a confused timidity--no fear of violence; no sense of threatened death, but a feeling of incompetence in this strange land, of making a fool of himself, of being despised by Fran and by these self-assured foreigners; a fear of loneliness; a fear that he might never be restored to the certainties of Zenith. (4, p. 62)

Although Dodsworth has conflicting needs, he doesn't rely on too many or varied defense mechanisms. Occasionally Dodsworth used identification to fill his need for identity.

He---who had but once in his life had attended a Rotary lunch---looked at the Rotary wheel and his smile was curiously timid. There was no reason for it apparent to him, but suddenly these banners made him feel that in the chill ignobility of exile he was still Someone. (4, p. 103)

The main source of protection he utilizes is rationalization:

Scholars. Men who knew. Suddenly he felt that he might have been such a man. What had kept him from it? Oh, he had been cursed by being popular in college, and by having a pretty wife who had to be surrounded with colored lights---. Besides a fellow did not become things---anyway not after five or six or seven years of age. He simply was things! If he had had the capacity to be a savant, nothing would have prevented. Or---Suddenly, he
felt better about it. Was it possible that in some involved unelucidated way, he himself was a savant in fields not admitted by the academicians as scholarship? (4, p. 272)

Dodsworth is a man who can think when he must so there is very little use of fantasy as ego protection in the novel. The one striking incident comes from deep conflict: "He dreamed that Fran had fallen from a cliff and lay dead below him, and that Minna von Escher had come to smirk temptingly at him." (4, p. 293) Here the need for intimacy can only force itself into expression past a strong surge from the superego.

The superego in Dodsworth seems to be fairly strong. He doesn't depend on outside controls for his behavior. He sees the necessity of staying with his wife at almost any price and he realizes the role he is to play as the ideal businessman. He is quite afraid to deviate from it and says that he is chained to respectability.

The ego seems to be doing its job well at first glance, but the lack of long range plans, and the fear of deep thinking indicate some trouble. "All thinking about matters less immediate than food, sex, business, and the security of ones' children is a disease, and Sam was catching it. It made everything more difficult." (4, p. 212)

Dodsworth is able to plan, but his trouble develops when the weakly felt id becomes more dominant. Dodsworth had been
content with the relationship with his wife all the time he was working. Through work the superego and ego have successfully supplanted the id. When the work situation is removed the id asserts itself and causes trouble, because the familiar devices for protection are no longer available. This is when the weakness of the ego shows up and Dodsworth becomes uncomfortable and unsure of himself. The superego may have been strong enough to cope with the problem had Dodsworth not gone to Europe. In Europe there was no familiar routine to fit the uses of the superego. The ego was needed to take control in the strange environment and balance the forces. Dodsworth can't satisfy the id in simple sexual affairs because of the demands of the superego, but his problem seems to be resolved when both forces are centered on Mrs. Cortright. Her respectability satisfies the superego and her attraction is finally beginning to be felt by the id. If the ego had been stronger, Dodsworth could have, in all possibility, saved himself the last trip to America, because he could have seen that Mrs. Cortright had solved his problem.

Thematic Analysis of Main Street

Descriptive Level (Main Theme)--- Carol Kennicott was a city librarian before she married Dr. Will Kennicott and moved to small Gopher Prairie. She despaired over the ugliness of
the town and the complacency of its residents. She spent most of her time planning unrealistic projects to better the town. She lost perspective on her marriage and herself. She attempted to find beauty in a harmless love affair with an affected tailor. When this failed Kennicott attempted to help her by taking her to California. After their return Carol found Gopher Prairie even more unbearable. She took her son and left Kennicott to work in Washington, D.C. After a year, Kennicott persuaded her to return to Gopher Prairie using much the same techniques as he did in their courtship. Immediately on return Carol decided things would never change and tries to accept this.

Interpretive Level --. A woman with a weakly integrated personality structure possesses a strong superego and a weak ego. She suffers from a lack of identity which shows up easily in village life. Her life is complicated with a desire for superiority springing from the superego, but the ego is unable to channel the appropriate action to achieve this goal. After many frustrating experiences the best solution that can be found is allowing the severely repressed id to function more consciously and allow the woman to gain some identity through a better relationship with her husband.

Diagnostic Level --. Main Street covers a period of many years, but as the novel begins, Carol Kennicott is the twenty-four year old bride of Dr. Will Kennicott. She is described
as having, "thin wrists, quince-blossom skin, ingenue eyes, black hair." (5, p. 8) Although Carol seems to be a strong athletic girl she sees herself in a different light: "She was not, she worried, strong enough to endure routine, and she could not picture herself standing before grinning children and pretending to be wise and decisive." (5, p. 13)

After her marriage Carol gives up her job as a city librarian and devotes her time to clubs, projects, and her home. Her interests are almost impossible to define because, "By turns she hoped to discover that she had an unusual voice, a talent for the piano, the ability to act, to write, to manage organizations. Always she was disappointed, but always she effervesced anew." (5, p. 91) The most enduring interest Carol possessed was reading and she had the habit of planning projects from books, whether they were suited to the situation or not.

Carol's behavioral needs are as hard to define as her interests:

I think I want you to help me find out what has made the darkness of women....what is it we want-- and need? Will Kennicott there would say that we need lots of children and hard work. But it isn't that....What do we want? We want everything. We shan't get it-- so we shan't ever be content. (5, p. 147)

Carol herself is not conscious of a specific answer to her discontent, but the problem seems to be that, "She was a
It appears that Carol had a need for superiority. She wanted to reform and manage. She was disturbed by complacency. She wanted to rise above Gopher Prairie: "She gazed about haughtily, but as she discovered that no one was interested in her she felt foolish, and ashamed of her irritation." (5, p. 206) The satisfaction of this need was complicated by a lack of positive self identity:

In the years of exile from herself Carol had certain experiences chronicled as important by the 'Dauntless', or discussed by the Jolly Seventeen, but the event unchronicled, undiscovered and supremely controlling, was her slow admission of longing to find her own people. (5, p. 224)

At best Carol only begins to see herself as a person: "She felt that she was no longer one half of a marriage but the whole of a human being." (5, p. 408)

Carol's lack of identity may be found in circumstances introduced in the novel also. She belonged to what there was of Gopher Prairie society. She joined all the clubs and projects, but her interest didn't last long. This may indicate that Carol possessed a weak ego which couldn't channel her actions in a realistic balanced manner, and so she went from project to project unable to work and wait for her plans to grow.

There is more evidence to support Carol's need for identity. At the beginning of her marriage, Carol sought identity through her husband: "(She) seem(s) almost to creep into his body, find in him strength, find in the courage and kindness of her man a
shelter from the perplexing world." (5, p. 34) But in the strong scientific doctor Carol can't find what she wants. This sends her into an affair with a poetic young tailor. Carol sees her father in him and for awhile she is satisfied. Although Carol saw her father in Erik she still lacks her own sense of identity. She leaves Gopher Prairie to go to Washington, D.C. to participate in war work.

Gopher Prairie was a simple, real world. Carol was uncomfortable there because of her lack of identity. It was obvious in this primitive way of life that she hadn't found herself. She escaped to Washington, D.C. where there was work, people, and a complicated, busy structure of life. Here she could hide her obvious lack of identity.

Omissions in the novel indicate more about Carol's personality structure. There is a lack of long range plans, and a lack of close relationships with anyone. The lack of long range plans indicates a weak ego that is unable to formulate plans for the satisfaction of needs, to test plans, or to wait until appropriate means of releasing tensions are found. The lack of close relationships points out Carol's lack of identity. To become intimate with another person one must be aware of his own self and identity.

Carol's conception of the world is not sharply defined as she is more preoccupied with her own struggles. She believes
the world should be beautiful, but finds only ugliness. She suppresses as much of her environment as possible. The plainness of the land demanded from her the ability to find beauty in others and her lack of identity didn't permit this. She fears the land:

She realized the vastness and the emptiness of the land. She skeleton iron windmill on the farm a few blocks away, at the north end of Main Street, was like the ribs of a dead cow. She thought of the coming Northern winter, when the unprotected houses would crouch together in terror of storms galloping out of the wild waste. They were so small and weak, the little brown houses. They were shelters for sparrows, not homes for warm laughing people. (5, p. 37)

Carol's relationship with her father is quite significant. She felt her father was superior to anyone she knew: "My father was the tenderest man in the world, but he did feel superior to ordinary people. Well, he was!" (5, p. 171) Carol sought her father in the men in her life and was unable to find him. This perhaps was a causative factor in her unhappiness with her husband. She saw her father as tender and romantic in Erik. This may indicate that she had been unable to overcome the childhood conception of her father as the appropriate love object. She also saw her father as a source of comfort and support: "It was not her husband to whom she wanted to run for protection--it was her father, her smiling understanding father, dead these twelve years." (5, p. 98) To further support the idea of Carol's fixation on her father is the lack of much mention of
the mother. She is mentioned specifically once: "Carol's mother died when she was nine. Her father retired from the judiciary when she was eleven, and took the family to Minneapolis. There he died, two years after." (5, p. 13) The early death of Carol's mother may account for her lack of identity. For a successful development, Carol should have at first loved her father, and viewed her mother as a rival. As she grew older she would have again turned to her mother and identified with her and the female role. Through this identification Carol would have developed her own sense of identity. The mother's death may have hindered normal growth, but the fact that Carol was nine when she died indicated more strongly the possibility of a problem in that area. She should have identified with her mother at around five years. Also the fact that her father died only four years later lessens the possibility that her attachment to her father was the normal result of the loss of the other parent.

Carol had an unsuccessful relationship with her husband. This may have been a double result of seeing her father as a love object and being unable to form any type of intimate relationship: "She felt for him an admiring affection--and she was sorry that she had nothing more than affection." (5, p. 266) With the people of Gopher Prairie, Carol was distant: "She was better acquainted with the utensils in the kitchen than
The only friend Carol realized that she had was her maid:

But she discovered that Bea was extraordinary like girls she had loved in college, and as a companion altogether superior to the Young Matrons of the Jolly Seventeen. Daily they became more frankly two girls playing at housework...it was the admiration of a freshman for a junior. (5, p. 108)

Through Bea, Carol could fill her need for superiority.

Carol's one deep relationship was with her son: "She had lived in people and in ideas about having ideas; but Hugh's questions made her attentive to the comedies of sparrows, robins, blue jays, yellowhammers." (5, p. 305) Carol also took pride in thinking of the great things Hugh might do.

Carol had her share of conflict. To gain the superiority she needed she felt she must behave in a respected manner. Her weak ego and lack of identity complicated this process. The weak ego was not strong enough to direct activity at the proper level at all times, and the need for identity sometimes overcame the ego. In college Carol had been happier. As she grew older it was increasingly harder for her to find identity, so she looked back to youth for it. Of course, this youthful behavior conflicted with the need for superiority:

In tam o'shanter and tweed skirt Carol felt herself a college junior going out to play hockey. She wanted to whoop, her legs ached to run. On the way home from shopping she yielded, as a pup would have yielded. She galloped down a block and she jumped from a curb across a welter of slush, she gave a student 'Yippee!'
She saw that in a window three old women were gaping. Their triple glare was paralizing. Across the street, at another window, the curtain had secretly moved. She stopped, walked on sedately, changed from the girl Carol into Mrs. Dr. Kennicott. She never again felt quite young enough to run and hallow in the public streets; and it was as a Nice Married Woman that she attended the next weekly bridge of the Jolly Seventeen. (5, p. 88)

Carol also harbored anxieties. She was afraid of being overpowered by the people of Gopher Prairie and thus never to be able to achieve superiority: "And along with these foreigners, she felt herself being ironed into glossy mediocrity, and she rebelled, in fear." (5, p. 258) Carol was also bothered by a lack of love:

She had gone to the women at afternoon-coffees, to the merchants in their stores, with so many outpouring com­ments and whimsies that she hadn't given them a chance to betray their opinions of her. The men smiled--but did they like her? She was lively among the women--but was she one of them? (5, p. 87)

Most of Carol's problems seem to stem from a weakly inte­grated personality structure. It would seem possible that from Carol's attachment to her father would develop a strong superego. Such a superego often develops in a child who has righteous parents who demand strict obedience. This happens especially if the child is strongly attached to the parents. The fact that Carol's father was a judge would indicate that he may have easily been strict and righteous although not enough is said about him to be absolutely sure. But if this is the case the strong super­ego may account for Carol's desire for superiority and partially
account for her blocked attempts at intimacy. The superego desires to be respected, approved, and correct.

Carol's attachment to her father when she was young may never have passed the Electra stage. This could account for the fact that she did not enjoy a good intimate relationship with her husband, because she saw her father as the appropriate love object. Furthermore if she didn't identify with her mother, her own identity would lack definition; thus prohibiting her from forming close relations with anyone.

It would also seem that Carol had a weak ego. She didn't carry through any of her plans. Her projects were not appropriate to reality and she was unable to channel her activity into areas which were appropriate.

Carol's id was severely repressed by her superego. She became fearful at any awakening of feeling within herself. She felt that these desires would destroy her chances for superiority: "It had been a transforming honeymoon. She had been frightened to discover how tumultuous a feeling could be roused in her." (5, p.26) Actually the id was not as strong as Carol's superego and she kept the id in good control. The real problem was the weakness of her ego.

Carol's use of defensive reactions delineates further her personality structure and needs. Carol relied heavily on
fantasy: "I believe! The woodland gods still live! And out there the great land. It's beautiful as the mountains. What do I care for Thanatopsis!" (5, p. 144) In this manner she was able to settle for the drab life and believe in something superior with which she could identify.

Carol did not make much use of identification because she could not find enough superior people to identify with. When she did find someone to identify with, the identification was strong and complete:

but Mairie Bruin was slim as Carol, and larger-eyed, and her voice was a morning bell. In her, Carol lived, and on her lifting voice was transported from this sleepy small-town husband and all the rows of polite parents to the stilly loft of a thatched cottage where in a green dimness beside a window caressed by linden branches, she bent over a chronicle of twilight women and ancient gods. (5, p. 210)

Carol used rationalization often, although this might indicate a functioning ego, it was the type of reasoning one could pick up easily by reading many books:

She gave judgment. 'A pitiful and tawdry love-affair.' 'No splendor, no defiance a self-deceived little woman whispering in corners with a pretentious little man. No he is not, He is fine, aspiring. It's not his fault. His eyes are sweet when he looks at me. Sweet, so sweet.' She pitied herself that her romance should be pitiful; she sighed that in this colorless hour, to this austere self, it should seem tawdry.

Then, in a very great desire of rebellion and unleashing of all her hatreds, 'The pettier and more tawdry it is, the more blame to Main Street. It shows how much I've been longing to escape. Any way out! Any humility so long as I can flee. Main Street has done this to me. I work, and--any way out. (5, p. 350)
This defense protects the personality in need of superiority.

Carol's weakly integrated personality and her conflicting needs cause her difficulty in living in the simple village. Her lack of identity shows up sharply against the simple routine of village life. With a reasonable degree of identity a person could easily form close relationships with those around him, more easily than in a big city. Carol's inability to form these relations hurt her attempts to be respected and thus superior. She was insecure and was so afraid that the "village virus" would pull her downward while she wanted so to go upward. If Carol had possessed a strong planning ego she might have easily reached a superior position within Gopher Prairie society.

Carol was unable to solve her problems completely. The best solution she could manage were the time the id came through strongly enough and attached her to her husband. It was only in this way that she established any identity and then it was only a fantasy derived identity. "That December she was in love with her husband.

She romanticised herself not as a great reformer but as the wife of a country physician. The realities of the doctor's household were colored by her pride." (5, p. 173)
Lewis Through His Characters

If these novels hold clues to the personality of Sinclair Lewis, the best place to look for these clues would be in situations treated favorably, or even over favorably, and in areas treated harshly or obviously omitted.

There are several areas in Lewis's three novels, *Babbitt*, *Dodsworth*, and *Main Street*, that are treated similarly. The areas of similar treatment in all three novels are the more important in analysis. An overview reveals that these areas include a situation of retreat, the harsh treatment of women, unsuccessful relations with spouses, lack of mention of parents, unfavorable mention of universities, and an unfavorable opinion of the business world.

In working through their problems all the main characters rely heavily on defensive mechanisms for ego protection. The most common of these in the three novels are fantasy, identification, and rationalization. In one of the novels reaction formation and repression also come into use.

The retreat plays an important part in all three novels. Each retreat is shown as a very favorable place. There is a quality of the ideal in all of them. For example in *Babbitt*, Babbitt goes to the Maine Woods with his best friend. In *Maine*, Babbitt rests, plays, and enjoys the company of other men. He
no longer reacts to people in a hearty back slapping manner.

In Babbitt's Maine, it's not cold and damp, there are no thunderstorms, mosquitoes, or grass snakes. Instead of these natural situations life is an idyl for the friends in Maine:

They did not talk much. The nervous loquacity and opinionation of the Zenith Athletic Club dropped from them. But when they did talk they slipped into the naive intimacy of college days. Once they drew their canoe up to the bank of Sunasquam Water, a stream walled in by the dense green of hardhack. The sun roared on the green jungle but in the shade was a sleepy peace, and the water was golden and rippling. Babbitt drew his hand through the cool flood and mused....(3, p. 126)

Dodsworth too has a retreat, two in fact, but the retreats in Dodsworth are not as dominant as Babbitt's. The first of these retreats is a golfing trip Sam took with his friends from Zenith:

It was a good jaunt. They laughed, and felt free of womenfolk and nagging secretaries, retold all the dirty stories they knew, drank discreetly, drove fast, and admired the golf courses on the North Shore above Chicago. Sam enjoyed it. (4, p. 211)

The other retreat in Dodsworth is the country villa Dodsworth shares with Mrs. Cortright. At the villa Dodsworth is able to relax and rest. He enjoys being away from the pressures of everyday life.

In Main Street, the retreat is a very short trip to the country:

They lurched to the highroad and awoke from their sun-soaked drowse at the sound of clopping hoofs. They paused to look for partridges in a rim of woods, little
woods, very clean and shiny and gay, silver birches and poplars with immaculate green trunks, encircling a lake of sandy bottom, a splashing seclusion demure in the welter of hot prairie....

Carol had found the dignity and greatness which had failed her in Main Street. (5, p. 61)

All three retreats are withdrawals from society. Babbitt expresses the idea that in reality you can't escape in this manner, so writing of this may be a form of wish fulfillment. The type of personality that would withdraw in this way would then withdraw to keep from being overwhelmed. There is also the possibility that the personality was removing itself from society to keep from committing acts its superego would object to, and that this is the best solution the ego could find in adjusting to reality.

In the case of the novels dealing with men, the retreats which include only men could hold further significance. Possibly the personality has homosexual leanings. Here he is in a complete male environment. Another possibility is that the male is unsure of his male role and that freedom from women removes a threat to this weak maleness.

There are complications in this pat answer when one remembers that Edith Cortright shares Dodsworth's villa. Here there is the possible explanation that Edith is first a respectable person that satisfies a strong superego and only secondarily a woman.
Her femininity is never strongly stressed.

Carol Kennicott is the largest complication in the scheme of the novels. Her retreat is shared with her husband. It may be possible to say that where the men found in these retreats homosexual company, that the woman is denied even this pleasure. As a result of not having found her own identity, and as being seen through the eyes of the author, she is unable to function without a dominant male. She is left to find solace only through her husband to emphasize her lack of standing as a person.

Still Carol is not denied a retreat completely. To search out Carol's retreat, you must return to her college and an earlier point in time. Carol enjoyed being with youthful people and Lewis stressed the idea that she enjoyed girl's sports. This may be the hidden homosexuality in Carol.

In two of the novels the harshest area of treatment is women and their relationships with men. Babbitt has a completely unsuccessful relationship with his wife. He dominates her and she is in a sense relegated to the position of a housekeeper. She is described as quite unappealing, and the reader is told that she trapped Babbitt into marriage. This is the only place she dominates Babbitt. Lewis doesn't give any other females much happiness either. Paul's wife, who does try to dominate her husband, gets shot for doing so, and completely disintegrates
without her husband. Babbitt does find a successful relationship with Tanis for awhile until she makes the first attempt to dominate him. Immediately Lewis has Babbitt cut her off.

Babbitt's older daughter is another good example of Lewis' harsh treatment of women. She is shown as plain, lifeless, and as unappealing as her mother. She never has a chance. She gets involved with a rather uninteresting man, and that's the end of her importance. The fact that Babbitt's younger daughter has a bit more life, may be that she's too young to be dangerous. Eunice, Babbitt's daughter-in-law, isn't treated too harshly either, but this may be because she lacks the intelligence to be dangerous.

In Dodsworth, Fran is treated harshly. She is a strong woman, but Lewis has Dodsworth leave her completely. Edith Cortright escapes Lewis' harsh treatment, but Minna is weak, Nande is vulgar, and Matey is too plump. Edith has none of these faults. She is more than anything else respectable and rather sexless.

In dealing with a novel whose main character is a woman there arise problems which complicate analysis. In Dodsworth and Babbitt, the harshest area of treatment is the area of women and their relationships with men. In Main Street, women take a more important role. In general, Carol is treated harshly as the heroine. Although her treatment is not more severe
than the two heroes throughout the novels, she receives worse
treatment at the end of the novel. Babbitt has a rough time in
his novel, but in the end through his wife's illness he is re-
solved to society and his place in it. Dodsworth comes off the
best in starting a new life with the sexless but respectable
Edith. But in *Main Street*, the harsh treatment of women is evi-
dent in the final solution for Carol. She returns to Gopher
Prairie to be resigned to her fate:

> After a week she decided that she was neither glad
> nor sorry to be back. She entered each day with the
> matter-of-fact attitude with which she had gone to her
> office in Washington. It was her task;--there would
> be mechanical details and meaningless talk; What of
> it? (5, p. 426)

As far as the other women characters in *Main Street*, they
are treated as harshly as women in the other novels. Maud Dyer
has to search and fight for love in a humiliating manner. Vida
spends tortured years as an old maid, Bea is killed by disease,
and Fern Mullins has her life ruined by the boy Cy Boagart.

If Lewis found relations with women unsatisfactory he has
certainly found a means of retaliation. He puts them completely
at the mercy of men. This leads one to believe that he had a
fear of being overcome by a woman. Possibly he was unsure of
himself in the male role or lacked positive self-identity which
made it impossible for him to form a close relationship with
women and this inability became a threat to him. This threat is
easily overcome in fiction as a wish fulfillment.
The pattern becomes more complicated in *Dodsworth*, because the central problem, although moving around and through his relations with his wife, focuses more directly on the search for identity. The fact that Dodsworth is able to live with Edith may be that she is the type of female acceptable to the strong superego that rejects the sexual desires of the id. Perhaps in Edith, Lewis has solved his problem as well as Dodsworth's.

The situation in *Main Street* is quite similar to the one in *Dodsworth*. The emphasis on bad marital relations stems from lack of identity. Identity must be established before intimacy can be formed. The most pointed clue to Lewis' personality is the omission of much parental discussion in the novels dominated by male figures, and the frequent mention of parents in *Main Street*.

An obvious omission in Babbitt is the absence of his parents. His mother is mentioned occasionally, but the only mention of his father is in passing. The mention of the father is made in a competitive manner: "It was a room as superior in comfort to the 'parlor' of Babbitt's boyhood as his motor was superior to his father's buggy." (3, p. 75) In *Dodsworth*, there is a complete omission of the parents. In *Main Street*, the mention of parents is quite significant and frequently introduced.

The competitive mention of the father in *Babbitt* may indicate that the author unsuccessfully passed through the Oedipal phase of development and has been unable to overcome hostility
toward the father. This may also explain the inability to have his characters form close relations with women; as he may still see his mother as the appropriate love object.

In *Dodsworth*, the complete lack of mention of the parents doesn't give much direction. Yet, since this is the later novel, it could be concluded that the problem has become even more buried in the mind of the author and thus he has not mentioned them at all. If the deeper problem in this novel is the search for identity, then the presence of the parents would complicate the search--if their influence had created the lack of identity in the first place. If their control had been strong and the writer had been unable to identify with the father successfully, then their absence would facilitate the search for identity.

In *Main Street*, the problem must be viewed from a different angle. It is obvious that Carol saw her father as a love object, and that she was unable to identify with her mother. An interesting device may be at work here. In the other two novels, where a man is the hero, this idea of the unsuccessful passing through the Oedipal stage must be inferred through omissions, but here in *Main Street* it is clearly brought out. The author may be unable to do this with his male characters, with whom he may identify, but with a female he can project his own problems without identifying with them. If he can show that it is the women who are unable to form the successful intimacy in marriages,
then he is absolved of all blame, and is in a sense the victim of unfortunate circumstances. Now the maleness, or lack of maleness in him, is not fault. He can be strong like Kennicott...The problem is Carol's: "It was not her husband to whom she wanted to run for protection--it was her father, her smiling understanding father, dead these twelve years."

(5, p. 98) In using this projective technique the author has been more able to correctly describe his own problem.

Another area that receives interesting treatment in the novels, is the mention of college. In *Rabbi*itt, "Noel Ryland, salesmanager of Zeco, was a frivolous graduate of Princeton, while Babbitt was a sound and standard ware from that great department-store the State University." (3, p. 59) The general attitude in this book is that college is necessary, yet the characters don't exemplify any kind of educated behavior.

In *Dodsworth*, education receives harsh equally treatment:

An education dominated by the beliefs that one goes to college to become acquainted with people who will later be useful in business, and that the greatness of a university is in the ratio of its students and the number of its athletic victories. (4, p. 379)

In *Main Street*, there is a third unfavorable mention of college:

Pious families in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, the Dakotas send their children thither, and Blodgett protects them from the wickedness of the universities...So the four years Carol spent at Blodgett were not altogether wasted. The smallness of the school, the fewness of rivals, permitted her to experiment with her perilous versatility. (5, p. 8)
In a general sense, it is the large universities that are treated badly. This dislike could easily come from a man who did not find achievement and a sense of belonging in college. In *Main Street*, Lewis is able to acknowledge the idea that a smaller less competitive place of higher education would suit the needs of a man who needed superiority. This is something the average man could not achieve in a large status school.

The business world is given a slightly degrading comment by Lewis in *Babbitt*. Business men are stereotyped, unthinking "joiners". Their deals are shady and they show little concern for the welfare of the community.

The business world is treated comparably in *Dodsworth*. The shady deals and futility of people becoming slaves to progress are mentioned, but even though Lewis has eliminated work from *Dodsworth*, there is a feeling of loss throughout the novel. Attitudes toward business are ambivalent.

The business world and work are given a slightly different treatment in *Main Street*. Dr. Kennicott is the first successful and reasonably happy worker in the novels. Dodsworth was successful and happy in the past, but not during the novel. Perhaps the author is enjoying vicarious pleasure and identification through the doctor. The general picture of the business world is exemplified by the unreal world of wartime Washington where Carol served as a routine clerk. Business makes for inferior people.
The business world is the world of responsibility. A person who is unable to accept responsibility might tend to reject it. It seems that Lewis was unable to accept the business world as it is.

From these examples it seems that the writing of Lewis shows that he had several needs which in some way are fulfilled in writing and expression. The withdrawal to the primitive life may be a protection for the strong need for achievement which is defeated in normal life situations. This achievement need may also explain the unfavorable comments of the business world and college. If the writer was unable to achieve to the high level demanded by this need in these areas he may be defending his ego by treating these subjects harshly.

The harsh treatment the author gives women may indicate a strong need for autonomy. The author resents influence exerted upon him from women. To overcome this he treats them as inferior. This treatment of women may reveal more than a basic need. It may indicate problems in development of the personality.

Harsh demanding parents with strong control may have caused the author to develop an overly strong superego. In this case the superego may reject relations with women as unacceptable. Another possibility is that the author may be uncertain of his masculine role and to the appropriate love object. The sparse
mention of parents in the novels indicates an unnatural situation. If the author was unable to progress through the Oedipal stage of development, the harsh treatment of women may be regarded as a result. This may also account for a lack of strong male identity as the author may not have identified with his father as a model for development. Without a strong sense of identity close relationships cannot be formed.

It seems that Lewis has needs of achievement and autonomy and that he needs to protect a weak ego. The situation is complicated by a strong superego and a weak sense of identity. The combination of needs and weak ego development has led to extreme difficulties in relations with women, for which the author compensates by treating them harshly in fiction a form of fantasy.

Conclusion

In the previous section, the inferences which were made about Sinclair Lewis' personality from three of these novels were summarized. A character sketch of Sinclair Lewis based on these inferences was made. Since the present writer did not know about Sinclair Lewis' life, the inferences that were made were based solely on the reading of the novels. After the character sketch was made from the novels, Schorer's (8) biography was read by the present writer. In the next section of this paper, a comparison of this picture of Lewis and of Lewis' character as seen by Mark Schorer is presented.
Mark Schorer's biography of Sinclair Lewis lends weight to some of the conclusions made about Lewis from the analysis of his novels. It does seem that there is a connection between the man and his literary product.

For instance, the novels indicate a strong need of achievement and autonomy in the author. The strong need for achievement was shown in the novels in several ways; one of which was the use of retreats from society made by the main characters. Lewis frequently retreated from pressure. As early as his Yale days Lewis took long solitary walks:

Almost at once he fell into the pattern that was to comprise his nonacademic life and this consisted chiefly of two ingredients--long solitary excursions on foot into the country and activities associated with the Y.M.C.A., which he joined immediately. (8, p.48)

Throughout his life Lewis retreated from people. That this is a result of pressure from failure to achieve as he would like, seems highly probable:

the top man in his class, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Zeta Psi, and Skull and Bones; and it was his world that Harry Lewis, the freshman, wanted. Allen Updegraff remembered that Lewis tried over and over to gain acceptance from the big men in the college, only to be 'kicked in the face over and over again' and to fall back once more among his own kind, the eccentric strays. (8, p. 69)

In particular the novels indicated a dislike for the college world, and these quotations serve to substantiate this quite readily.

The harsh treatment the writer gave women in his novels
indicated a need for autonomy. Lewis himself states this and Schorer repeats it:

'All my life, whether in relation to my father, my university, my bosses on jobs, or to you, I have functioned better, more surely and resolutely, when I have been in charge, not bullied by someone else.' (8, p. 431)

Lewis left his wives often. He could not tolerate being told what to do by them.

The novels also indicated that Lewis had problems in the development of personality. They gave further indication that this was the result of harsh, demanding parents with strong control and that the problem involved an overly strong superego. A boyhood friend reports that Lewis indeed had such parents: "his father...hadn't any imagination, little conception of a child's point of view (was) dictatorial, harsh, and a bit cruel." (8, p. 13)

The Lewis personality structure does seem to be poorly integrated and the possibility of an overly strong superego may be considered. This may possibly account for Lewis' compulsive attention to order and cleanliness. He had a place for all his belongings, and was horrified by a young guest who left his clothes scattered about his room. The stronger area for consideration may be his ambivalent attitudes toward women. It is possible that a strong superego made him see relations with women as unacceptable: "He was nineteen now, and all that year,
apparently he did not come near a girl. He dreamed of literary females in the absence of real ones." (8, p. 71) The fact that he dreamed about girls indicates that the absence of girls was not strictly from a weak sexual drive.

The area of relations with women is very significant as part of the study of personality structure. The novels gave strong indication that Lewis was uncertain of his masculine role and the appropriate love objects; the reason being a failure to progress through the Oedipal stage of development. The biography substantiates this. Lewis did not have a good relationship with his father, but spent more time with his step-mother: "A schoolmate suggested that of his two parents it was with this step-mother that the boy spent much the greater amount of his time." (8, p.16) This may have led to the marital difficulties and he may actually have perceived his "mother" as the appropriate love object: "As I cannot dance I just went along with Ma to look on." (8, p. 9)

The further possibility is that Lewis lacked positive identity with the male role, which would cause bad marital relations:

...that was his incapacity for tenderness. He could be generous, he could be sentimental, but to tenderness he was a stranger. He did not like the body, his own or others. Early in their marriage, he had said to his wife, half whimsically, half apologetically, 'I exist mostly above the neck,' and he was always telling her that the erotic relation between people did not really matter. (8, p. 596)
The biography also indicates a strong preference for the company of men. Throughout his life Lewis went from one close male relationship to another. Most of his secretaries were male, although this was a necessity for night work. He constantly chose men to take trips with him rather than his wives. This may indicate latent homosexuality: "Around two in the morning he came into my room and sat on the edge of the bed, 'Bill,' he said, 'I love you, but I must go.'" (8, p. 534)

This problem in development should also be observed in a weak sense of identity. Schorer constantly hints at this, but one of the best examples may be seen in his constant taking of roles as in the case of his impersonation of his father:

Then an old man with a white beard, side whiskers, metal-rimmed spectacles, and a cane, tottered into the room and introduced himself in quavering nasal tones as Dr. E. J. Lewis, who had come to Paris to visit his son. (8, p. 319)

Another example is his great anger at people who did not recognize him:

Lewis arrived with a parcel which he asked the clerk to get to his room, 'What is your name, sir?' asked the clerk innocently enough, whereupon Lewis exploded in a rage, and then demanded, 'Do you realize that you are talking to a fifty-thousand-dollar-a-year man?'

(8, p. 434)

The lack of positive self-identity prevents close relationships. This was the greatest problem in Lewis' life. He could not form a close lasting relation with women as shown by the failure of two marriages and the desertion by his young
Neither could he form a close lasting relation with male friends. People came and went through his life and no one endured throughout as a friend. Lewis even had the habit of making yearly inventories of friends gained and lost throughout the year. The lists are long on both sides.

As a final point the novels indicated a weak ego. This is found in the biography also. He constantly goes from one idea to another. He cannot make long range plans, and one project after another interests him. In this light it is amazing that he finished so many novels, but this probably is the result of his great need for achievement. Lewis' favorite means of ego protection was fantasy: "When they played make-believe games, like Robin Hood, Harry Lewis would be swept into the fantasy with a kind of mad strenuousness, and he would go on with it for hours, even days...." (8, p. 21)

It really seems that the conclusions made after analyzing the novels can be used here as a summary: "It seems that Lewis has needs of achievement and autonomy and that he needs to protect a weak ego. The situation is complicated by a strong super-ego and a weak sense of identity. The combination of needs and weak ego development has led to extreme difficulties in relations with women."

The quotations used in this short conclusion are representative of the life of Lewis as presented by Schorer. The only
aspect of his life that seems contrary to what the novels lead one to expect is that Lewis kept in constant touch with his father until the elder Lewis' death. Autobiographical materials might help clarify the relationship between Lewis and his father.

In general the analysis of the novels presented an accurate picture of the author. Nothing surprising or directly contrary was found in the biography. This does seem to indicate that it is possible to find the personality in the works of the artist, which is not surprising seeing that the use of projective techniques in clinical work and analysis is widely accepted.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


