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Invisible Cities:
New York, Fiction and Alternative Cartographies

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Contents

New York City: cities and fictional constructs.

> Each block is covered with several layers of phantom architecture in the form of past occupancies, aborted projects, and popular fantasies, that provide alternative images to the New York that exists.
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> Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York.*[1]

Writing in 1988 David Harvey suggested that "the city is no longer treated as an entity malleable for broad social ends, but as a collage of spaces and people, of ephemeral events and fragmentary contracts."[2] Although Harvey believes that it is capitalism that controls the geography of the city, here he recognises the notion that cities exist not as one objective reality, but as a series of understandings and experiences – representations – of the same space. As Westwood and Williams refer to it; "the city is *many* cities,"[3] which suggests that cities exist as a collection of fictional experiences.

This notion of the city existing as and within layers of fictions is increasingly prevalent in contemporary urban theory.[4] Shields argues that a variety of representations are what makes cities available for appreciation and comprehension[5] and thus it is important to examine what the understanding and analysis of fictional texts, including those outside of the architectural theory discipline, bring to the dialogue about cities. However there is very little discussion within this debate about urban fictional representations such as novels or films, despite these providing some of the most interesting depictions and perceptions of city life and offering "another language in which to pose key questions and to search for answers."[6] Therefore, one way to explore the premise of cities being made up of a multitude of subjective experiences is through an

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1. Koolhaas, R, *Delirious New York: A Retrospective Manifesto for Manhattan*. New York: The Monacelli Press. 1994.
2. Harvey, D. "Voodoo Cities." *New Statesman*. September, 30th 1988, p. 33.
3. Westwood, S and John Williams. Eds. *Imagined Cities: Signs, Scripts, Memory*. London: Routledge. 1997. p. 6.
4. Westwood, S and John Williams. pp.1-4.
5. Shields, In, Barker, C. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage. 2003. p. 371.
6. Westwood, S and John Williams. p. 13.

analysis of the understanding and construction of urban space in literary representation. The best approach to this is by providing a case study of an actual city using its representation in fictional texts. This maintains the real geography whilst allowing the examination of fictional texts in order to explore the subjectivity of a city on a number of levels.

The choice of city, and resulting choice of fictions, is important as they must demonstrate that individuals occupying a similar geographic space experience and understand this commonality in a variety of different ways. Therefore the city must be significant enough for a number of fictional representations to have been produced about it, and these texts must be simultaneously varied enough to provide a broad scope of analysis, whilst focused enough to cover the geographic area. One city that provides such conditions is New York. This city has been central to American life in a number of ways and thus a large variety of novels and films have been written about and set there, allowing a wide range for choice of fictions. In order to focus the case study more precisely it is necessary to focus the investigation further and concentrate on the fictions produced as a result of the climate of the late-1980s in Manhattan and the impact of the business culture of Wall Street.

There are several distinct reasons for engaging with this period in New York City, and the fiction that came out of it. Firstly it is important to be aware of the connection between local and global economics and the geographic and cultural growth of a city. One important factor, particularly to North America was the recession of the 1970s and the following economic boom of the 1980s that allowed an increase in consumer spending. This returns the discussion to Harvey's observations. He stated about this period that "the fate of individual cities depended on how they were situated in this

maelstrom of change."[7] The impact of the replacement of stability with "volatility and insecurity, flexibility and mobility"[8] meant that cities had to adapt to a new climate, both politically and culturally. The primary response to this change was, then, the pursuit of consumption; a trend that was highly evident in the 1980s. As Saskia Sassan highlights, the changing nature of, and response to, urban space can be understood in relation to the emergence of "global cities"[9] and the post-recession interplay of culture and economics. This too has been highlighted in the work of Westwood and Williams. They comment that "the localities of the city are part of a wider set of relations, an ensemble of the economic, political and cultural moments"[10] in relation to understanding experiences and constructs of cities.

One of the ways that the synergy of social culture and capital is most evident is during the increase in conspicuous consumption that dominated the ethos of the late-1980s – a trend that was particularly perceptible within the social groups involved in and affected by finance, such as the investment bankers and brokers on Wall Street. It is from this fundamental influence and resulting socio-political cultural climate that much of the fiction responding to the period emerges in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Thus an analysis not simply of a specific city, but of a more particular area and culture, can be made.

It is important, however, before a discussion of the selected texts, to touch on the overall geographic and cultural importance of this area and era, in order to securely ground the project. The tendency for the events and culture surrounding Manhattan, and specifically Wall Street, to affect the rest of New York, and indeed to some extent the

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7. Harvey. p. 34.
8. Harvey. p. 34.
9. Sassan, S. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1991. "The more globalized the economy becomes, the higher the agglomeration of central functions in a relatively few sites, that is, the global cities" p. 5.
10. Westwood, S and John Williams. p. 7.

rest of Northern America, is not specific to the 1980s; rather it has been an underlying influence throughout history.

Rem Koolhaas refers to the ideology of "Manhattanism" in his retrospective manifesto for the city *Delirious New York*, arguing that it is the one urban philosophy that has not lost faith in the metropolitan condition, even from its very conception.[11] He states that the "geographic self-consciousness" that this ideology generates "is translated into spurts of collective energy; megalomaniac goals."[12] This is certainly something that has been evident from the early settlement of New Amsterdam[13] to modern day New York City, especially in relation to the cultural and political influence of Wall Street and its dominance in fiction.

Manhattan was originally discovered by Henry Hudson, who came upon the island whilst attempting to find the North West passage for the Dutch East India company. By 1624, Dutch settlers had officially arrived on the tip of the island claiming it from the Algonquian Indians and calling it New Amsterdam. It is from this original settlement that Wall Street emerged and derives its name. In 1653, the Dutch colonials built a large wooden wall around their town in order to protect it from attack, the street adjacent to which became known as "Wall Street." Eleven years later, the Dutch handed their settlement over to the British, who changed its name to New York, and the expansion into what would become known as Manhattan began.

In 1771, a slave market was set up on Wall Street and thus began the street's role at the island's economic core, which grew with the chartering of the Bank of New York in 1784. By 1790, the informal trading of stocks and shares was already taking place in and around Wall Street, and in 1794 a group of twenty-four brokers who were know to trade under a buttonwood tree that stood at 68 Wall Street signed the first agreement stating

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11. Koolhaas. p. 10.
12. Koolhaas, R. p. 25.
13. The original Dutch settlers name for what is now Manhattan.

only to trade with each other. It was on this basis that the first manifestation of the New York Stock Exchange was formed.[14] From here it developed to occupy sites such as the Tontine Coffee House, until it became established in 1903 at its current headquarters at the corner of Broad and Wall Streets.[15]

As the city grew economically, so it did geographically. The aspirations for the growing city were such that in 1807 three designers, Simeion deWitt, Gouverneur Morris and John Rutherford, were commissioned to formulate a structure that would define the city, fixing not only what was already occupied, but planning the control of the remains of the island of Manhattan: thus the existing grid of twelve north-south avenues and one hundred and fifty-five cross streets (2,028 blocks in total) was devised.[16] It is this cartographic structure and its "indifference to topography"[17] that is one of the things which makes Manhattan so interesting to explore in relation to subjective experience; the structure itself appears so objective, yet the understanding and representations of the experiences of the space are so divergent. It is worth noting at this point that Wall Street, and the financial district of Manhattan that existed as the original New Amsterdam, remains distinct to the grid structure. This is interesting when considering the particular nature of the space: it appears set aside from the rest of the city both spatially and soci-politically, whilst simultaneously being a significant geographic area and maintaining a huge cultural impact. The discrepancy between the experience of the space of the city, and the cartographic structure, and subsequently the alternative mappings that are produced, is what presents itself within the fictional representations of New York.

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14. Fraser, S. *Wall Street; A Cultural History*. London: Faber and Faber. 2005.
Burman, E et al. *New York*. London: Dorling Kindersley. 2000. pp. 15-31
Koolhaas, R. pp. 13-25.
15. Burman, E. et al. p. 21.
16. Koolhaas, R. p. 18.
17. Koolhaas, R. p. 20.

As Steve Fraser points out, Wall Street has "long been an object of fascination"[18] and indeed it holds an "indisputable magnetism."[19] As early as the seventeenth century it was recognised as the core of city life, both socially and culturally,[20] by the 1870s it had already become a tourist destination,[21] and at this point over a quarter of the country's financial resources were based in New York.[22] This illustrates how economic trading has an impact on the overall living standards of not only New Yorkers, but Americans. The Stock Exchange has always had an impression on wider society, however, it wasn't until the 1980s that this influence coincided with direct interest from the public.

The recession of the 1970s, like those that came before it, prompted a renewed scepticism about the continuing economic strength of post-war America. The Dow Jones had been slowly losing value over a period of fourteen years, a decline rather than a crash, but still of great significance. This decline, coupled with the de-industrialisation that was taking place, forced the markets into a period of inertia. It is perhaps this dramatic slump that caused the "unapologetic hedonism" that came with the "new era of mass infatuation with [Wall] Street"[23] in the 1980s. The presidential inauguration of Ronald Reagan in 1981 marked the move into an period of "financial euphoria"[24] characterised by what Fraser refers to as "the compulsive narcissism inspired by consumer culture."[25] The increase in conspicuous consumption during this time became synonymous with the newly labeled "yuppie" culture. The term "yuppie", understood as having been devised for the "*young, urban professional*" class, was more often used to express a careerist obsession with status and salary and the pursuit of the latest fashions, clubs and reservations at the newest restaurants, that accompanied the

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18. Fraser, S. p. x.
19. Fraser, S. p. xi.
20. Fraser, S. p. 3.
21. Fraser, S. p. 83.
22. Fraser, S. p. 103.
23. Fraser, S. pp. 476-483.
24. Fraser, S. p. 474.
25. Fraser, S. p. 483.

considerable amount of disposable income (particularly of those in the financial sector). It was out of this climate, the "new Gilded Age"[26] and yuppie approach to living, that some of the most interesting fictional accounts of Wall Street and its cultural implications emerged.

Wall Street, the film directed by Oliver Stone[27], and the novels *Brightness Falls* by Jay McInerney[28] and *American Psycho* by Bret Easton Ellis,[29] all in some form deal with the cultural and political influence of Wall Street and it's impact on the authors' and protagonists' construction of space. The characters occupy the same or similar places that are connected to the cultural ethos of the financial district of New York in the 1980s; restaurants, clubs, bars, galleries and neighbourhoods. However, their relationship with, and systems for understanding, space vary dramatically. This demonstrates the notion that three different New Yorks are present simultaneously; it exists as a city constructed from layers of fictions. Literary critic Peter Brooker has commented that New York City is "a palimpsest of densely packed change and differentiation."[30] He goes on to state that "times coexist, places merge and separate. Still we, or novelists and characters in fiction, seek a stabilising centre."[31] This comment accentuates the idea that New York as a geographic area acts as a central point around which individuals construct and create their own understanding of space, as an analysis of the above texts will demonstrate.

Within each of the texts, there are themes that emerge as central to that particular construction and mapping of the city. The understanding of space in *Wall Street* is based on the protagonist's relationship with information, how it is gained and then used. This is particularly demonstrated in the way that social and business space become synonymous. The flow of fiscal and social information permeates their occupation of

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26. Fraser, S. p. 490.
27. Stone. O. Dir. *Wall Street*. 1987.
28. McInerney, J. *Brightness Falls*. London: Bloomsbury. 1992.
29. Ellis, B.E. *American Psycho*. London: Picador. 1991.
30. Brooker, P. *New York Fictions: Modernity, Postmodernity, The New Modern*. London: Longman. 1996. p. 220
31. Brooker, P. p. 221.

space and thus impacts how they relate to and map Manhattan. *Brightness Falls*, however, presents a slightly different way of constructing space. Although it too portrays the utlisation of social space for business, it is more concerned with the correlation between private domestic space and public places such as galleries and restaurants. In this text it is the relationship between public and private that is the basis of the characters understanding of the city. The construction of space in *American Psycho* is similarly based around restaurants, clubs and bars. However the narrator's obsession with surface and style, and the literary techniques employed by Ellis, means that the places occupied throughout the novel take on a catalogued, spaceless quality, that permeates the understanding of the city, producing a fragmentary alternative cartography. Finally, it is important to highlight a theme that is evident throughout all three fictions: visibility. Although the notion of visibility is responded to slightly differently in each of the texts, it underlies, to some extend, each varying construction of the city. Therefore the trope of visibility should be taken note of throughout the study as it demonstrates something implicit in the mappings of New York City during this period.

Wall Street: Gekko, greed and the flow of information.

> Everything is power and money and how to use them both
> [...] We mustn't be afraid of snobbism and luxury
>
> Diane Vreeland.[32]

In December 1987, two months after the "Black Monday" stock market crash, Oliver Stone's film *Wall Street*[33] was released. The film depicts the rise and fall of stockbroker Bud Fox (Charlie Sheen) and his seduction into insider trading at the influence of financial giant Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas).[34] Many critics commented that although Stone cannot have foreseen the October crash, he may have rushed the production to capitalise on the situation.[35] As Martin S. Fridson points out[36] the writing, production and release of *Wall Street* came only a year after Stone's previous picture, *Platoon.*[37] It was during this time that the arrest and conviction of inside trader Ivan Boesky[38] by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) took place, bringing the potential illegal activities of those within the financial sector to the fore. Thus Stone's depiction of the financial world arrived at a time when the public's focus on, and interest in, Wall Street was at its peak, to some extent vindicating his generalized critical depiction of traders.[39] The sharpened concentration on the flow of information between those involved in financial dealings, such as stockbrokers[40] and investment bankers,[41] and the resulting increase in their social visibility due to escalating convictions by the

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32. Confidante of the Reagan family. From: Fraser, S. *Wall Street; A Cultural History*. London: Faber and Faber. 2005. p. 476.
33. Stone, O. Dir. *Wall Street*. 1987.
34. For a more thorough outline of the plot, characters and cast see Appendix A.
35. Fridson. M.S. "Wall Street." In. Toplin. R.B. *Oliver Stone's USA: Film, History, and Controversy*. Kansas: University Press Kansas. 2000.
36. Fridson, M.S. p. 121.
37. Stone, O. Dir. *Platoon*. 1986
38. Boesky is one of the people upon whom Stone supposedly modeled Gekko.
39.. Friedson, M.S. p. 121
40. An individual who buys and sells stocks, shares and other securities on behalf of a client.
41. An individual in charge of dealings such as corporate loans, mergers and acquisitions and pension funds.

SEC in the 1980s, is a theme that underlies *Wall Street*. This is particularly prevalent in relation to the way the protagonists within the film understand, experience and thus construct space: socially, culturally, politically and geographically.

The yuppie culture of the 1980s which emerged as a result of the economic boom was situated within a climate of excessive expenditure. This trend was accompanied by the desire to be socially visible, hence the growth of conspicuous consumption. This consumption was gastronomic as well as material, with the social visibility of restaurants and bars being a significant part of yuppie lifestyle. Stone appears acutely aware of this: much of *Wall Street,* and particularly the protagonists comprehension of New York, relies upon it. He uses the relationship between Bud Fox and Gordon Gekko as the pivot around which all other action is centered. Similarly, it is from this focal point that an exploration of the construction of space in the film can be established. At the beginning of the film Stone sets up a contrast between the spaces that Gekko and Fox are able to occupy, subsequently highlighting their very different experiences and understandings of the space of New York. This demonstrates that although they live and work in the same city, indeed the same area of it, their experiences vary dramatically. As the film progresses and Fox becomes part of Gekko's world, his utilisation and understanding of space changes and he is taught by Gekko about the value of information, both obtaining and using it, thus his experience of the city changes. At the centre of this is the correlation between space and flow of information and the ubiquitous issue of visibility.

Before an exploration of the links between the construction of space, the flow of information and visibility in *Wall Street* can take place it is important to be aware that these issues need to be explored not simply in terms of the protagonists of the film, but also in connection to Stone's directorial techniques. It is because of the latter that the former is so strongly evident, as the following analysis will illustrate. Stone's use of juxtaposed scenes, specific shots and camera angles are all instrumental to depicting

the specific relationship that the characters have both with each other and their surroundings, therefore one cannot be discussed without reference to the other.

The film's opening introduces several things that are central to the depiction of Wall Street, and an understanding of Gekko and Fox's construction of space. Stone chooses to begin with shots of sunrise over the skyline of the Manhattan financial district. Although other images feature in this sequence, such as Fulton Fish Market and the Brooklyn Bridge, all are elements which share the same area of downtown, and are to some extent sidelined due to the dominance of the skyscrapers. These images prompt several meanings within the first few moments of the film.[42] Manhattan as a whole is not pictured, rather the entire focus, including during aerial shots, is on Wall Street and its vicinity. Here Stone is primarily placing the events of the films geographically, however the sequence also subtly demonstrates that Fox and Gekko's conception of the city is equally focused on the financial area both geographically and soci-culturally; their understanding of New York City as a space is constructed according to social, cultural and economic mapping, rather than cartography.

It is perhaps best to focus on the character of Gekko to begin an analysis of space in *Wall Street* as it is his version of New York that underlies the plot progression. Gekko's understanding of the city relies upon an interesting interrelationship of visibility and information: he must be socially and politically visible, whilst maintaining ambiguity with regard to how he gains fiscal information. This is portrayed in the film not only by the spaces he occupies, but the way that Stone presents them. One of the most successful ways that Stone achieves this illustration is through a contrast between the office and leisure spaces of Fox and Gekko and the types of action that take place within them.

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42. This occurs before any of the protagonists are introduced to the viewer.

Gekko's office is a large open plan space within a office tower, situated high enough for him to command a view across the financial district, an aspect heightened by a wall entirely of windows. It should be mentioned that the view from Gekko's office is not about dominion, but knowledge, it is a signifier of what he knows, or has the potential to know. It is about "liquid" control (as the dialogue hints at several times), rather than static domination. It is important that his office not only holds his work desk and a boardroom table and chairs, but also a more informal seating area and a treadmill. Stone draws attention to these elements during the scene in which Fox finally meets Gekko in person. Stone's direction of the scene includes other people using the different areas of the office while Gekko conducts business, then, as Fox leaves, Gekko is seen in the background using the treadmill whilst simultaneously discussing a takeover with a colleague. This is a subtle, but vital, indication as to Gekko's construction of space: business and leisure space exist simultaneously, the flow of information transgresses conventional spatial separations.

Interestingly this is also the case in terms of geography. When Fox leaves the office after his introduction to Gekko, Stone chooses to have Natalie, Gekko's secretary, in the background of the scene informing Gekko that he has a conference call set up, including people from London, Los Angeles and Delaware. Therefore Gekko not only has the ability to transgress spatial understanding in relation to city, but also in terms of a broader geography: business can be conducted *from* anywhere *to* anywhere, simultaneously

Gekko's transgression of the understanding of work and play as separate spheres allows him to conduct business anywhere, and thus gain and utilise information wherever he is. He not only combines leisure activities with office space, he actively conducts business in social spaces, and implicitly garners information within these places whilst appearing to be merely sociable. This becomes increasingly evident as the

film progresses, particularly during scenes with Fox. Stone uses this technique of the contrasting understandings of space and information flow throughout the early stages of the film to set up the fundamental difference between Gekko and Fox. Fox is called to "21"[43] in order to meet with Gekko. When he arrives it is clear that Gekko has already dined, the implication being that he has already conducted one lunch meeting before seeing Fox. Whilst talking to Fox, Gekko is interrupted by another couple who pause to say hello as they are leaving. He repeatedly makes nods and gestures to other patrons, and indeed stops himself on the way out to congratulate someone on a deal. This collection of minor instances, when combined, demonstrate that every space for Gekko can be utilised concurrently for social appearances and business connections and the collection of information with regard to both.

Stone highlights this more explicitly with the meeting between Gekko and Fox that takes place at the Wyatt Club squash courts. They discuss business whilst in the sauna together, during which Gekko overtly states that "the most valuable commodity I know of is information."[44] Stone follows this with a scene in the locker room that once more exhibits Gekko's amalgamation of working and recreational space. Whilst re-dressing he explains to Fox about his approach to business, during which he is interrupted by another club member who asks him how a deal is going:

> Gekko (To Fox):[45] It's trench warfare out there, pal. Hey Georgie,
>
> Georgie: Hey, Gordon.
>
> Gekko: How's Larchmont treating you?

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43. An infamously desirable and expensive club/restaurant in upper midtown Manhattan.
44. Stone, O. 30mins. 21 secs.
45. Parentheses mine.

Georgie: Fine. How's the Praxar deal going?

Gekko: You should know, pal.

Georgie: Asshole!

Gekko (returning to previous conversation with Fox) : And inside here, too.[46]

The point at which this altercation intercepts the dialogue with Fox provides another opportunity for Gekko to implicitly indicate his approach to things: information can be gained and used anywhere. Fox needs to be both aware of this and able to utilise it to his advantage in order to impress Gekko and become like him.[47]

It is important to be aware that Fox's ability to treat the city in the same way as Gekko, as a collection of spaces to be used to acquire information, cannot simply occur through a change of thinking. It must be accompanied by a certain degree of social and monetary advantage. This highlights that the fictional layers of New York, as presented by certain constructions of space, rely upon both economic and social hierarchies. In order for Gekko to use certain spaces to affect a flow of information he must primarily have access to them, most of which requires a certain degree of social and economic power: dining at "21" is both expensive and difficult to manage without a reservation or social connection. The importance of this is demonstrated when Fox pursues Sir Larry Wildman, a rival raider, to gain information about a deal he is about to conduct.[48] He is unable to follow Wildman into Le Cirque, a select, fashionable restaurant, because he neither has a reservation nor enough social standing to walk in and be given a table.

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46. Stone. O. 31mins. 23secs - 31mins, 36secs.
47. Stone even suggests this through minor, yet fundamental, details such as having Fox begin wearing braces in imitation of Gekko (although not of such good quality and taste in order to maintain the subtle separation between them.)
48. Gekko cannot conduct the investigation himself as this would make his acquisition of the information visible, and thus diminish his ability to surprise Wildman and influence the deal.

However, Fox's situation changes when he has proved to Gekko he can get information. It is at this point that Fox's new use and understanding of space becomes significant.

At the point at which Fox is accepted by Gekko and allowed to conduct business in his name[49] two significant alterations to his use and understanding of space take place, and subsequently his relationship with the city changes. Firstly he begins to recognise the notion that information can be obtained through numerous channels,[50] and as a result conducts his acquisition of it by obtaining access to spaces via different means. Secondly, as his economic status grows, so does his social status[51] and thus he is able to follow Gekko's example of combining work and leisure spaces.

In order to gather the inside information that will continue his favour with Gekko, Fox joins a maintenance company that clean offices at night. This allows him "legitimate" access to offices of important firms so as to illegally obtain information. Therefore his experience of space becomes divided: at night he enters offices and buildings to gather information, during the day he uses what he has found to his (and Gekko's) advantage on the stock market. Similarly, Fox begins to use his social acquaintances to gain information,[52] then allows them to benefit from the outcome. It is during this that Stone begins to illustrate Fox's adaptation to the use of social space for business, and thus his assimilation of Gekko's relationship with the city.

This is most obvious when Fox suggests that he and Gekko take over Bluestar airlines, the company for which Fox's father is a union representative. They host a meeting with the three union reps, which Fox conducts at his new apartment on the Upper West Side. This meeting is the clearest demonstration of Fox having changed his

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49. Fox is given a certain amount of power of attorney (POA) over Gekko's accounts in order to trade in stock on his behalf. This is worth noting because it means the transactions can't be traced directly back to Gekko, again maintaining his invisibility with regard to the deals, thus providing immunity if the SEC find anything suspicious in Fox's dealings.
50. The foremost of which being insider trading, an illegal practice and thus one that requires ultimate discretion, hence Gekko's precaution in assigning Fox POA.
51. Helped significantly by Gekko's introduction of him to Darien Taylor, a beautiful interior designer who then becomes his girlfriend – but interestingly only after he gains enough money to take her out to the right places.
52. For example, he re-acquaints himself with a friend who has become a senior associate at a law firm in order for them to mutually benefit from using information about corporate rulings.

approach to space, and subsequently to business.[53] Interestingly this meeting is arranged during a conversation whilst traveling on Gekko's private jet,[54] another example of his newly acquired transgression of space: Fox initiates the conversation during the journey, showing he has become more confident, and is now constantly thinking about business and money. Another example of this mix of business and social time is highlighted when Fox returns to see Roger Barnes.[55] Roger is concerned that the SEC have managed to find out what they are doing and so says to Fox, "no more lunches, no calls, all right?"[56] As this piece of dialogue indicates, Fox has taken to conducting his business meetings over lunch like Gekko, disguising his business meetings behind a façade of social interaction.[57]

It is important to recognise the impact that this re-construction of space by Gekko and Fox to transgress the separation of work and leisure spaces has on the specific geographic understanding of New York; the underlying crux of the fictional layers of the city. The city of New York as occupied by Fox and Gekko is rather limited geographically, despite the combination of social and business space. Although both Gekko and Fox have dealings all over the country, and indeed internationally, their literal space remains restricted. The focus lies within the financial district, the restaurants and clubs of Upper Midtown Manhattan, and the summer houses and beaches of West Hampton. Their understanding of the city is in no way reflective of the entire space occupied by it, it is contained cartographically by their social and financial experiences.

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53. It is significant that his father only visits his new home at this point, rather than previously for a purely social visit. As Darien comments, "I hope you come here more often, under less formal circumstances." Stone, O. 1hr, 19mins, 21secs.
54. Another place where Gekko conducts both social and financial business – as is implied by Stone having the place separated into two rooms, into the second of which Gekko follows a beautiful woman after his meeting with Fox.
55. His college friend, turned lawyer, who has been doing business with him using inside information.
56. Stone, O. 1hr, 27mins, 56secs.
57. It is perhaps important to note that Fox is not as successful at balancing the space or work and leisure. It is during this meeting with Roger, and the board meeting he is invited to as a consequence, that he discovers Gekko's plan to liquidate the company. The fact that he didn't know about this, or wasn't told, implies he hasn't been paying enough attention to straight business.

The city, for Gekko and Fox, is made up of discrete interiors and places, such as particular offices, certain tables in certain restaurants, the back seats of Gekko's car, all of which results in a finite mapping of New York. This means that there is no understanding of the city as a complete geography. Stone highlights this specifically, not only though his partial depiction of the spaces,[58] but also through his editing techniques. Stone cuts between scenes with no intermediary shots to explain a shift in time or location, thus emphasising the notion that the relationship with space held by the protagonists is constructed in the same partial manner. The split screen montage sequences that occur during two transactions initiated by Fox again plays with this idea, bringing different people and areas of the city together on the screen simultaneously.

The incomplete mappings of Manhattan that are signified through the understanding of the city by Gekko and Fox, and played upon by Stone's cinematic techniques, provide for the different levels of visibility, mobility, accessibility and knowledge experienced and utilised by the characters during their construction of space.[59] This demonstrates the active role the protagonists have with regard to the construction and mapping of their understanding of the city, and subsequently the highly individual city that is experienced as the result of this. For Gekko, and increasingly Fox, the architecture of the city is made up of interiors rather than whole buildings, certain views and the information ascertained from them and the social and business communications conducted as a result. The city of New York as mapped by the protagonists in *Wall Street*, is characterised by the quick move from one place to another: it is not a large space through which the individual moves, but a series of separate locations between which they can jump.

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58. He often presents glimpses of interiors or spaces with little broader context.
59. Each of these factors automatically points to its dichotomy: invisibility, inertia, inaccessibility and ignorance.

Brightness Falls: Privacy, Publicity and Publishing.

> Downtown is a style, a sensibility, a state of mind, reflected in the art world, fiction, restaurants, and the way people live.
>
> New York Magazine.[60]

The 1980s obsession with style and consumption was so prevalent that it became just as dominant in the arts world as in fashion. As a result, writers were increasingly becoming as conspicuous as celebrities, and the term "brat pack" was no longer simply used by Hollywood to refer to a specific collection of young film stars;[61] on the east coast it became synonymous with a small group of up and coming writers,[62] of which Jay McInerney was a part. Although it was the success of his first novel *Bright Lights, Big City*,[63] that launched McInerney into the public arena, it is his slightly later work, *Brightness Falls*[64] that presents a more interesting insight into New York City in the late 1980s. It is set between the Januarys of 1987 and 1988, and unlike Oliver Stone's *Wall Street,* depicts the lead up to and immediate aftermath of the Stock Market crash,[65] yet the majority of the novel focuses on events and characters involved in publishing. This provides a pertinent starting point to discuss the cultural and geographic impact of Wall Street in the 1980s as the integration of the two professions that takes place during the novel demonstrates the considerable impact of the events that take place in and around Wall Street.

It is likely that McInerney's personal experience of New York in the late-1980s impacted his writing in *Brightness Falls*, and that subsequently his experiences of the

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[60] *New York Magazine.* Dec. 25th 1989 – Jan 1st 1990. p. 3.
61. A group including Andrew McCarthy, Rob Lowe, Emilio Estevez and Molly Ringwald whose most prominent films are *St Elmo's Fire, The Breakfast Club and Pretty in Pink.*
62. Including Bret Easton Ellis and Tama Janowitz.
63. McInerney, J. *Bright Lights, Big City.* New York: Vintage. 1987.
64. McInerney, J. *Brightness Falls.* London: Bloomsbury. 1992.
65. October 1987, otherwise known as "Black Monday."

spaces in the city formed the basis of the protagonists construction of space as seen in the novel. The sudden success of *Bright Lights, Big City,* and the resulting media attention meant that McInerney became a celebrity. This brought him access to the best clubs and restaurants. However it also meant that he was constantly in the limelight, and thus his private and public lives merged. It is this issue of publicity and privacy, and its intertwining with social and domestic life that forms the core of the construction of space and experience of New York in *Brightness Falls*. The protagonists understanding of space is formed according to social meaning and relations, underlying which is a degree of social visibility. This is evident both through the events that take place throughout the novel and the techniques that McInerney uses as a writer such as metaphors, similes and his approach to the description of space. The basis for the overall response to, and understanding of, space, comes from that presented through the characters of Corrine[66] and Russell Calloway.[67] It is their relationship that is central to the novel and thus their experience of space provides the foundation from which to begin analysis.

The opening chapter sets up the motif of the interchangeability of public and private space, which comes to underlie the rest of the events in the novel. It depicts a party held in the Calloway's apartment attended by various acquaintances. This appears as nothing more than a gathering of friends, however, as the narrative demonstrates it is more complex:

> In the year's they'd lived in New York, their East Side apartment had become a supper club for their less settled acquaintances, a sort of model unit for those thinking of buying into the neighbourhood of matrimony.[68]

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66. A Wall Street stockbroker.
67. An editor at Corbin, Dern and Company publishing house.
68. McInerney. J. 1992. p. 7.

This quotation implies not only that Corrine and Russell's apartment is implicitly understood as a social space, but also that their marriage is understood as something to aspire too, and thus it is publicly visible and under constant scrutiny. Similarly, opening the novel with a public event in a domestic space highlights the way that social relationships are fundamental to the Calloways and their friends, and that these are what form the basis of their understanding of the city and the spaces within it.

As the novel progresses it becomes more apparent that social space is primarily experienced through the use of private domestic space for public events. There are numerous scenes that take place in characters homes depicting social or business events. These range in scale from Tish Corbin holding a one-on-one business meeting with Russell in her home,[69] to the party hosted by Minky Rijstaefel in her mansion on East 72nd Street that the majority of the New York elite seem to attend.[70] The spaces are constructed according to the importance of social visibility, as is demonstrated by where they take place and the tabloid media coverage they receive.

A key example of this is the party held by Bernie Melman at his Southampton beach house. One of the reasons that this particular example is interesting is because although geographically the events take place in Long Island, it is considered by those who attend the party to be an extension of a specific cartographic and cultural centre of New York City: rather than a place to relax for a holiday, it is about increasing social status and visibility. The narrative comments that "when Corrine worried about the extravagance of their socialising Russell insisted that he was surreptitiously conducting business,"[71] highlighting the way that although the geography has shifted the space is

69. McInerney. J. 1992. Chapter 13. pp. 136-141.
70. McInerney, J. 1992. Chapter 18. pp. 182-188.
71. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 261.

still constructed in the same was as that of the city.[72] The mix of people at Melman's party, how they interact and their reasons for attending, demonstrates how the world of finance in the 1980s had come to dominate all relevant spaces: social, cultural and geographic. The cartography "of densely populated villages"[73] that make up the Hamptons has been literally built up due to "the fruit of new fortunes made on Wall Street."[74] However the social space is occupied, as the party demonstrates, by a variety of people; writers, film stars, senators, as well as finance executives.[75] This social cross-section, brought together by a considerable member of the New York economic elite, demonstrates the cultural importance of Wall Street, and thus it's geographic impact: people attend Melman's party in Southampton because the space there is effectively that of Wall Street in terms of the transaction of social and economic deals. This example encapsulates what is fundamental in all three fictions in this study; the socio-cultural, and thus psychic, understanding of space directly impacts the individuals' geographic mapping, providing an alternative cartography of the city.

Before discussing the impact of the media coverage of the events throughout the novel on the protagonists' construction of space, it is important to examine more closely the use of social spaces such as restaurants and clubs. These places are most significant during the section of the novel that concentrates on Russell's bid to take over Corbin, Dern, during which two separate factions form. The groups' differing choice of places to inhabit simultaneously illustrates a shared implicit importance attached to social public places, and how these choices signify different lifestyles and reputations.

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72. The impact of the protagonists construction of New York City on their experience of other places is evident when, towards the end of the novel, Russell re-locates to LA, and yet has problems dealing with a different sort of city; "Years before, he'd moved to New York, believing himself to be penetrating to the centre of the world, and all of the time he had lived there the illusion of the centre had held [...] but Los Angeles had no discernable center and was also without edges and corners." McInerney, J. 1992. p. 389.
73. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 261.
74. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 259.
75. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 263.

The beginning of the gradually intensifying importance of restaurant and club spaces is found when Russell first meets with Trina Cox to discuss the possibility of taking over Corbin, Dern. It is at this point in the text that the publishing and Wall Street worlds begin to significantly coincide,[76] and the importance of the understanding of space and its resulting construction becomes more apparent. They hold their meeting at Smith and Wollensky's, a restaurant that is "the midtown outpost of the Street."[77] It is significant that they meet away from Trina's office, it condenses her time allowing her to have lunch and conduct business,[78] and demonstrates this to those around her, "explaining that her first boss had always taken her here with clients [...] she looked out at the room. A fat man two tables over waved at her."[79] This instance of her being recognised in this particular space illustrates that it is usual to conduct business away from the office[80]and that her being recognized is likely due to her repeated attendance at Wollensky's: the people who wave to her are those she is unlikely to have contact with other than within a shared social space.[81] This incident demonstrates the reciprocal relationship in *Brightness Falls* of space and social relations: not only is space constructed according to them, but social relationships often rely on a certain shared construction of space.

This reciprocation of space and social relations is found even more clearly during the takeover of Corbin, Dern. The two different sides occupy spaces that reflect their understanding of space as a way of projecting a certain reputation to those around them.

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76. Although Corrine is a stockbroker and works on Wall Street, there is little specific attention paid to the collision of Russell and Corrine's environments, other than in terms of accompanying each other to social events, such as exhibition openings. These such examples however, do provide a continual, albeit subtle, reminder of how the world of work is implicitly bound up with the social sphere, and subsequently how Corrine and Russell actually inhabit the same spaces.
77. McInerney, j. 1992. p. 147.
78. Similar to Gekko in *Wall Street*. Stone, O. 1987.
79. McInerney. J. 1992. p. 146-147.
80. Again a situation similar, although more overt, than those found in *Wall Street*.
81. "'friends of yours?' She shook her head. 'Traders.' She said, 'the Neanderthals of the financial world.'" McInerney, J. 1992. p. 148.

The "Calloway-Whitlock-Lee triumvirate,"[82] chose the Brill Building on the West Side as their "Headquarters."[83] McInerney describes how,

> Trina Cox's new firm occupied a suite in Rockefeller Centre. Their midtown canteen was "21." Here, under Trina's supervision, Russell and Whitlock wooed bankers and brokers [...] authors were courted downtown at The White Room with Washington.[84]

This choice of space by the takeover group illustrates that they want to be understood as new, exciting and social, coming to the company with a fresh new approach, yet still having the financial influence to do so successfully. This is illustrated by occupying fashionable, yet expensive places, and entertaining at numerous bars and restaurants outside of their main business space.

Harold Stone and Jerry Kleinfeld, however, occupy a far more formal space that implies a reputation of grandeur that clients can trust. As McInerney states;

> The old management were conducting their own campaign at The Four Seasons [...] Harold abhorred this politicking, but he took some enjoyment from the campaign by making a serious run on the oldest and best bottles in the wine cellar [...] Those authors who were not currently in AA tended to be thrilled when a twenty-year-old bottle of Petrus or Romanee-Conti arrived.[85]

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82. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 252.
83. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 252.
84. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 252-253.
85. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 253.

As these two sections show, space is understood by both groups as literally impacting the construction of their reputations, and thus attracting the attention of other people within their social or business group.

The final issue that impacts the construction of space throughout *Brightness Falls* is the role of the media. This is significant because it encompasses both the transition of private domestic space to public space; the social relationships construct these places, and visibility. The issue of the media influence will also bring the discussion to a point from which to conclusively outline how the protagonists determine the architecture and urban space of New York City.

The media in *Brightness Falls* often responds to the social events in the homes of the social elite, with pieces of the gossip column by Juan Baptiste intercepting the narrative at key moments, after him having attended the events.[86] Similarly at other central moments in the narrative, such as when Corrine has lunch at Harry's with Duane,[87] or the reading at the Y by Victor Propp,[88] the media is either present, or comments on it. Therefore there is a large amount of focus and hype surrounding the places, events and those who attend them, which acts as one of the ways that the protagonists construct and then understand the spaces they occupy.

This final point in reference to the influences on the experience of space by the main protagonists of *Brightness Falls* brings the analysis to the specific issue of how the architecture and urban space of New York City is understood by this group. Again, as the analysis of *Wall Street* highlighted, the understanding of the city is based around a finite cartography of specific areas, this time related to a complex correlation between social interaction and domestic interiors. The architecture of *Brightness Falls*, however, is rather complex: McInerney pointedly mentions specific pieces of architecture, and yet

86. McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 92-94, 222,
87. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 46.
88. McInerney, J. 1992. p. 239.

the most important aspect of these are who is using them. For example, he refers to particular museums, or the sites and styles of houses, in particular Bernie Melman's, "limestone, Beaux-Arts mansion in the East Seventies", or Tish Corbin's "townhouse on Gramercy Park"[89] yet far more important is who occupies, or has the potential to occupy these places. The mappings in *Brightness Falls* are located around three main areas, Wall Street, Long Island, and the museums and homes of Upper Midtown, based around how and where people meet to socialise or discuss business. Thus, again, demonstrating the tacit link in the novel between social relations and space.

There is only one significant transgression of this triad of spaces, which is found in the subplot of writer Jeff Pierce, and the impact of his drug use and subsequent admittance to a rehabilitation clinic on Corrine and Russell. The transgression occurs because Jeff does not appear to place the same social importance onto space as the other protagonists. Jeff's drug addiction seems to make him oblivious or unconcerned about the socially expected spatial understanding. Instead he seems to have a more passive, or unconstrained relationship with the space of the city. He goes wherever the addiction requires him to, whether that is the social spaces of midtown in order to continue his role as an important New York writer,[90] or into the "Reagantown" shanties of the homeless in Alphabet city, to score drugs.[91]

The experience of New York by Jeff presents an interesting relationship with the space of the city, one in which the occupant seems almost oblivious to the space they exist within. As the narrative comments during one social encounter during a photo shoot, "Jeff had long since learned that his actual presence was not required at these sessions."[92] This completely different approach to the space, architecture and geography

89. McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 160 and 137
90. McInerney, J. 1992. pp.52-57.
91. McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 85-88.
92. Mcinerney, J. 1992. p. 56.

of the city is something that is outlined more explicitly in *American Psycho* by Bret Easton Ellis and demonstrates another layer in the collection of fictions of New York.

American Psycho: catalogues, clothes and spaceless cartography.

> Aesthetics dominates ethics. Images dominate the narratives of coherent analysis.
>
> David Harvey, *Voodoo Cities.*[93]

In 1991, amid media attention and controversy,[94] Bret Easton Ellis' novel *American Psycho*[95] was published. Set during in 1980s Manhattan, the novel portrays the consumption lead life of Wall Street yuppie Patrick Bateman, whose existence is ruled by a combination of money and murder.[96] Ellis has commented that the novel stemmed partly from his own sudden immersion in the yuppie lifestyle that was gripping Manhattan in the mid-to-late-1980s. His first work, *Less than Zero,*[97] published while he was still in college, had captured the attention of first the public and then the press who cited him as a representative for his generation, despite being only twenty-one at the time. Like his slightly older counterpart McInerney, Ellis discovered he was quickly becoming a celebrity, and was able to leave college and move to New York a "very successful young man."[98] It was soon after this that he began writing *American Psycho*, "as a way of fighting against myself slipping into a certain kind of lifestyle,"[99] one that his father had already impressed upon him during his childhood.[100] However, "he was so close to his

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93. Harvey, D. "Voodoo Cities," *New Statesman*. Sept. 30th. 1988. p.33.
94. Publishers Simon and Schuster who originally agreed to publish the novel, breached their contract and dropped it after several key chapters depicting the murders of women were leaked to the press. The book was then taken up by Random House and published, receiving a huge amount of press coverage.
95. Ellis, BE. *American Psycho*. London: Picador. 1991.
96. For a more detailed plot outline see Appendix C.
97. Ellis, BE. *Less Than Zero*. London: Simon and Schuster. 1985.
98. Clarke, J. Interview with Bret Easton Ellis. http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/8506/Ellis/clarkeint.html (accessed, August, 2006.) n.p.
99. Clarke, J. Interview with Bret Easton Ellis.
100. Ellis has commented that *American Psycho* to some extent is a "send off" to his father who was "the sort of person who was completely obsessed with status and about wearing the right suits and owning a certain kind of car and staying at a certain kind of hotel and eating in a certain kind of restaurant regardless of whether these things gave him pleasure or not. Murphet, J. p. 11.

subject matter, immersing himself so deeply in the life, that the danger of becoming his own subject of contempt was great,"[101] as the complex tone[102] of the novel implies.

The difficulty that Ellis had in separating himself from his material when writing *American Psycho* demonstrates the all-encompassing impact that the prevailing yuppie lifestyle of conspicuous consumption had in the late-1980s, particularly in New York. This also supports the notion that this way of living, ruled by money and status and illustrated in the restaurant and club culture, significantly affected the understanding and experience of New York City's geography and cartography. *American Psycho* provides one of the best examples of this seen in fiction: the literary techniques used by Ellis, the nature of the narrative and it's subject matter, all combine to demonstrate an extreme example of a possible construction of space produced by the cultural climate of 1980s Wall Street.

Patrick Bateman is the main protagonist of *American Psycho* and the voice narrating the events taking place; thus the reader experiences the space of New York City according to his understanding and construction of it. There are several things that are central to Bateman's construction of New York, specifically Manhattan, and therefore fundamental to an analysis of *American Psycho* in relation to the "city as *many* cities."[103] Bateman's construction of space seems to be based around a series of key experiences; dining at certain restaurants; attending certain clubs or events; shopping in certain stores, all of which are premised on consumption. His relationship with space, and how it is presented during the novel is therefore grounded in conspicuous consumption and the places or people related to it. Even the spaces of Bateman's office, health club and

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101. Murphet, J. p. 16.
102. The novel is generally received as satire, however, it is difficult to discern what specific tone the narrative, and Bateman's character, aim to present: there is no open moral judgement, or commentary on the events that occur. Although this lack of commentary reflects Bateman's character, and thus is perfectly suited to the first person account, makes the text more difficult to receive. This is one of the things that caused the degree of controversy surrounding the book's publication.
103. Westwood, S and John Williams. Eds. *Imagined Cities: Signs, Scripts, Memory.* London: Routledge. 1997. p. 6.

apartment are presented according to this theme, demonstrating that the Wall Street culture of consumption pervades the relationship with all spaces experienced.

The most striking aspect of Bateman's construction of the city, which is demonstrated through the relationship he has with space and subsequently the techniques that Ellis uses in producing the narrative, is that it is superficial and almost spaceless. His relationship with places seems to be based purely on the commodities on display within them, the potential for consumption or the people with whom he is consuming. The narrative and dialogue of the text reflects this: often written as if it is a catalogue describing the function or specification of a product.[104] This technique also encompasses "descriptions"[105] of space, as is seen with the following depiction of Bateman's office which focuses not on the space, but what fills it;

> [I'm] staring across the office at the George Stubbs painting
> that hangs on the wall, wondering if I should move it, thinking
> maybe it's too close to the Aiwa AM/FM stereo receiver and
> the dual cassette recorder and the semiautomatic belt-drive
> turntable, the graphic equalizer, the matching bookshelf speakers
> all in twilight blues to match the scheme of the office.[106]

This strange approach to space is developed throughout the novel, with Ellis utilising narrative techniques such as lists or sentences and paragraphs broken by ellipsis in order to emphasis Bateman's relationship with the space he occupies.

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104. It is interesting to note here that Ellis often used product catalogues as the basis of sections of his narrative, particularly in relation to Bateman's penchant for electrical gadgets; "TV set from Toshiba; it's a high-contrast highly defined model plus it has a four-corner video stand with a high-tech tube combination from NEC with a picture-in-picture digital effects system (plus freeze frame)," or morning toilet; "I use the Probright tooth polisher and next the interplak tooth polisher (this in addition to the toothbrush) which has a speed of 4200rpm and reverses direction forty-six times per second; the larger tufts clean between teeth and massage the gums while the short ones scrub the tooth surfaces. I rinse again using Cepacol. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 24-25.
105. This is placed in quotation marks because the technique that Ellis uses is very different to the traditional methods of description found in other texts, for a comparison see the spaces depicted in *Brightness Falls* in the previous section.
106. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 63.

Another technique used by Ellis within Bateman's narrative is the focus on labels and names. This is found throughout the novel and demonstrates Bateman's obsession with designer labels and brands, which is so extreme that Patrick's narrative often becomes simply an inventory of the products people are wearing, completely sidelining any form of emotional response to the other characters:

> Van Patten is wearing glen-plaid, wool-crepe suit from Krinzia Uomo, a Brooks Brothers shirt, a tie from Adirondack and shoes by Cole-Hann. McDermott is wearing a lamb's wool and cashmere blazer, worsted wool trousers by Ralph Lauren, a shirt and tie *also* by Ralph Lauren and shoes from Brooks Brothers.[107]

This mode of understanding is extremely important in relation to his construction of space, as it forms the basis of it: his relationship with space is founded by money and status, which is illustrated by labels and products. This can be demonstrated by looking more closely at the subtle cartographic understanding of the city that Bateman constructs.

The majority of places that Bateman is concerned with, and inhabits, are clubs and restaurants. Although this echoes the motif of spaces in *Wall Street* and *Brightness Falls*, the importance of these places in *American Psycho* is more specifically grounded in geography, with social meaning of the spaces emerging as a result of this geography, rather than vice versa. This tendency is highlighted in a telephone exchange between Bateman and McDermott, during which Patrick comments: "I am fanatically opposed to

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107. Ellis, BE. 1991 p. 150.

anywhere *not* on the Upper West or Upper East side of this city."[108] The geographic understanding of the city as constructed by the importance placed on certain restaurants or bars by Bateman is a direct result of his use of the Zagat Survey.[109] Bateman (and the other characters in the novel), treats the book as the ultimate guide to the city, thus his construction of New York becomes based on the cartography of Zagat. His only concern with regard to the space is whether they have, or need, a reservation, particularly at a good table, and what rating the restaurant was given, " 'Now where do we have reservations at? I mean I'm not really hungry but I would like to have reservations somewhere. How about 220.' An afterthought: 'McDermott, how did that rate in the new Zagat's?' "[110]

This construction of the city based around a cartography produced as a result of a fanatical obsession with the Zagat ratings of places means that Bateman's relationship with spaces completely relies upon the location of restaurants and clubs. Therefore his geographic understanding of New York is not only episodic,[111] but quickly becomes unreliable:

> "This isn't the way to Chernoble."[...]"Avenue C, right?"
> He coughs politely. "I suppose," I say, staring out of the
> window. "I don't recognize anything."[112]

Another reason for the geographic disorientation that Bateman often experiences is found in the way that the space of the city is often mediated: through a taxi or limousine

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108. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 301. Italics original.
109. This is a guide to New York restaurants and bars put together annually by Nina and Tim Zagat. It rates places according to food, décor, service and cost based on survey responses from patrons. The results are published in a highly recognisable slim crimson book, and according to the New York Times is "a necessity second only to a valid credit card." Gathje, C. and Carol Diuguid. Eds. *Zagat Survey: 2006 New York City Restaurants.* New York: Zagat Survey. 2006.
110. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 381.
111. This will be discussed in more detail later.
112. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 185. The other voice here is a limousine driver.

window. Bateman is most likely to move between the spaces of restaurant and clubs via a taxi or limousine, and during these journeys will be distracted from an awareness of places by interacting with those with him, thus arriving at his destination with no real geographic awareness. This is most striking during the ride with Tim Price to Evelyn's party that opens the novel. Throughout the journey landmarks are noted. "the word FEAR sprayed in red graffiti on the side of a McDonald's on Fourth and Seventh,"[113] however this is intersected with a conversation with Price, distracting Bateman from the surroundings and so, "suddenly the Upper West Side."[114]

This mediation is also experienced by other characters, most notably Tim Price, a character who Bateman singles out as "the only interesting person I know."[115] Price, like Bateman often carries a Walkman with him, and this acts as another way of separating himself from those around him and the space they are traveling though, "he slipped his walkman on and turned the volume up so loud that the sound of Vivaldi was audible even with the windows halfway open and the noise of the uptown traffic blasting into the taxi."[116] By having other characters experience this mediation, intentionally or otherwise, Ellis implies that for the social group presented in the novel this is a natural experience of space.

The continual separation between space and the protagonists, coupled with a cartographic understanding of the city based on the spaces listed in the Zagat guide results in an episodic understanding of the geography and architecture of the city. Bateman's New York is made up of the continually shifting architecture of clubs and restaurants as their reputations grow and fade. His obsession with only being able to

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113. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 3.
114. Ellis. BE. 1991. p. 6.
115. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 21. This particular comment is also notable because Tim Price is a character who disappears at the beginning of the novel, only to re-appear towards the end with no explanation. Similarly at certain points at the beginning of the novel he exhibits behaviour, and makes comments that could be seen as suggesting that he shares Bateman's psychopathic tendencies "if all your friends are morons is it a felony, a misdemeanor or and act of God if you blow their fucking heads off with a thirty-eight magnum?" p. 34. "if another round of Bellinis comes within a twenty-foot radius of this table we are going to set the maitre d' on fire." p. 46.
116. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 38.

occupy the best spaces,[117] and the tendency for these to change according to the opinions of those around him, means that there is no coherent settled geography for Bateman to orientate himself within, instead the city exists as a series of disconnected locations for him to attempt to navigate, with a few constants, such as his apartment building, office and a few clubs that seemingly cannot go out of favour.

In *American Psycho* the specific impact of this formulation of space on Patrick Bateman is evident not only through his characterisation and response to situations,[118] but also the literary techniques that Ellis uses to depict them. There are two specific techniques that Ellis employs throughout Bateman's narrative that can be understood as linked to his relationship with the city, the first is the plot formulation, the second is the use of parataxis.

As Julian Murphet points out, Ellis' writing works "almost exclusively within a non-narrative mode of literary construction, preferring the effect of the work to emerge from the mounting of episode upon episode."[119] This type of narrative construction is utilized to its greatest advantage and effect in *American Psycho*. The lack of linear plot compliments Bateman's understanding of the city (or lack thereof), and the reader's awareness of this increases exponentially as the narrative becomes irregular. Towards the end of the novel, as Bateman grows almost entirely unhinged, Ellis increasingly breaks up Bateman's language and sentences using parataxis and ellipsis. Parataxis refers to the technique of using groups of clauses or phrases within sentences without conjunctions. This can be demonstrated during the "Chase, Manhattan" episode;

> ...nodding toward Gus, *our night watchman*, signing in,
>
> heading up in the elevator, higher, toward the darkness

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117. Which is not only true for the restaurants themselves, but the seating or table placement within the restaurant.
118. Part of which is due to being a serial killer.
119. Murphet, J. p. 18.

> of his floor, calm is eventually restored, safe in the
> anonymity of my new office, able with shaking hands to
> pick up the cordless phone, looking through my Rolodex,
> exhausted, eyes falling upon Harold Carnes' number,
> dialing the seven digits slowly, breathing deeply, evenly.[120]

This technique of breaking up the narrative into short pieces is precisely what the use of ellipsis achieves later in the novel,

> I saw some guy in the men's room...a total...
> Wall Street guy ... wearing a one-button viscose, wool
> and nylon suit by ... Luciano Soprani ... a cotton shirt
> by ... Gitman Brothers ... a silk tie by Ermenegildo Zegna.[121]

The above passages both illustrate Ellis' utilisation of literary techniques to break the text up into fragments, echoing precisely the understanding of New York that Bateman exhibits as a result of his construction of the city's space and architecture: a fragmentary, episodic geography based around the mappings of restaurants and clubs in specific areas.

An exploration of the murders committed by Bateman, and the nature of the psychopathic character they demonstrate, is important at this point as the way these episodes are presented in the text is connected to Bateman's construction of space. The violence depicted, specifically the sexual violence, is described in the same distanced emotionless manner as any of the other episodes in the text, despite its horrific nature. It

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120. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 338. The ellipsis that opens the paragraph is original, as is the italicisation. This section also holds an example of Bateman's slip from first to third person, that takes place during points of particular disturbance.
121. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 359. This style continues for the rest of a long paragraph.

is recounted by Bateman in the same catalogued style as when describing his apartment or a new restaurant:

> What is left of Elizabeth's body lies crumpled in the corner of the living room. She's missing her right arm and chunks of her right leg. Her left hand, chopped off at the wrist, lies clenched on top of the island in the kitchen, in it's own pool of blood. Her head sits on the kitchen table and it's blood-soaked face – even with both eyes scooped out and a pair of Alain Mikli sunglasses over the holes – looks like it's frowning. I get very tired looking at it and though I didn't get any sleep last night and I'm utterly spent, I still have a lunch appointment at Odeon with Jem Davis and Alana Burton at one.[122]

As this extended quotation demonstrates, Bateman's narrative not only presents the mutilation of Elizabeth in the same factual way that he would with the clothes or objects around him, but he moves effortlessly from this to the announcement of his lunch meeting, with no change in style or tone.

The absence of emotion or compassion during the killings and violence is an extension of his overall relationship to his surroundings, and construction of space. It is defined by what it is not: it is not emotive, not affected, not concerned. Bateman's relationship with, and understanding of, anything – commodities, people, places – is defined according to absence or fragments, and it is from this that his alternative cartography of the city is constructed. For Bateman New York is not a city broken into

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122. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 279.

the series of spaces he occupies, but a series of spatial episodes that coincide to form the city: a sporadic mapping according to a fragmentary social geography.

Conclusion: New York City; fictional and geographic palimpsest.

> When we use the term "inner city" we don't mean the city as a manifestation of what's within us, but perhaps we should.
>
> Michael Ventura, *Cities of Psyche*[123]

The analysis of *Wall Street*, *Brightness Falls,* and *American Psycho*, demonstrates two things; firstly that none of the individuals within the text relate to the space of New York City in a supposedly conventional geographic manner, and secondly that since this way of constructing the space of the city is present in all three fictions it is more typical than it at first appears. The three fictions studied share the basic tenants of being grounded in the geographic and cultural setting of Wall Street in the 1980s, the literal sites in the texts are often the same, or are located within blocks of each other, and yet the mappings of the city as produced by the protagonists are subtly different. This is due to the meanings that underlie their relationships to the places and areas. Their differing construction of New York is a result of the meanings placed on the spaces they occupy, and thus their city exists more significantly as a socio-culturally constructed geography than as a cartographic one. The fragmentary, episodic geography of New York that is common to all three experiences of the city in the texts therefore returns the issue to Harvey's comment that the city has become to be treated as a "collage of spaces and people, of ephemeral events and fragmentary contracts."[124] What remains to be explored in more detail is to what extent the specific architectural geography of New York in the 1980s had an impact on this construction of space, how deeply this has become

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123. Ventura, M. *Cities of Psyche.* Shadow Dancing In The USA. Los Angeles: Tarcher. 1985.
124. Harvey, D. "Voodoo Cities." *New Statesman.* September 30th 1988, p.33

embedded in the fiction of the period, and why an analysis of the understanding and construction of urban space in literary representation is useful for architectural theory.

Several architectural events occurred in 1980s New York that had a significant impact on how the occupants of the city, and specifically those involved in Wall Street, related to it's geography and space. However, before exploring those events it is important to make an observation specifically with regard to Wall Street. It becomes increasingly obvious when examining both the cultural and geographic history of New York[125] that the name "Wall Street" has come to be used interchangeably to refer to the geographic site and a certain soci-cultural phenomenon. This is something that has become implicitly understood, and used throughout other cultural artifacts, such as the texts analysed in this study. This dual usage of the term Wall Street highlights the way that a space can become known synonymously in terms of both cartographic and social meaning, and it is precisely this trend that the construction of space by the protagonists of *Wall Street, Brightness Falls* and *American Psycho* implies.

One of the main ways that the architecture of 1980s New York helped produce the mapping of the city present in the texts is found in the club and restaurant culture. The impact of this culture is present throughout all three fictions studied, albeit in slightly different ways, thus implying that it considerably affected the occupants of New York City. All three texts point to the impact of the constantly shifting clubs and restaurants in Manhattan; it is vital for the protagonists to constantly be aware of the changes in order to remain socially and geographically "hip." The speed of the changes that take place is dramatic, "two weeks before this particular club had been the dead centre of hip consciousness,"[126] the result of which is not simply that the social spaces are fluid, but that the architecture and geography of the city is constantly changing. As Ellis' *American*

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125. For example see, Fraser, S. ***Wall Street: A Cultural History***. London: Faber and Faber. 2005. Or, Burman, E. et al. *New York*. London: Dorling Kindersley. 2000.
126. McInerney, J. ***Brightness Falls***. London: Bloomsbury. 1992.

Psycho emphasises, the protagonists often find themselves in different places that occupy the same spaces; "I run into Harold Carnes at a party for a new club called World's End that opens in a space where Petty's used to be on the Upper East Side."[127] It is therefore not surprising that the cartography of the city, as constructed by the characters in the texts, appears to be fragmentary and episodic, as this is precisely how the architecture of the city appears. Similarly, the limit of the spaces they inhabit are reflected in this trend for the quick occupation, liquidation and re-occupation of the limited sites for restaurants and clubs within Manhattan.

The fast rate of urban change is something that, although ongoing, was particularly prevalent in New York City in the 1980s, as reflected in the increasing amount of gentrification taking place in the city.[128] This is a piece of cultural context that is openly present in all three fictions, most obviously in reference to the connection between this issue and the homeless population. The use of the homeless population of Manhattan in each of the texts indicates two key things, firstly the impact of gentrification and the changing nature of the urban landscape of New York, and secondly a differing layer of fictional experience and subsequent construction of the city.

In *Wall Street*, Gordon Gekko makes one direct comment in reference to a homeless man who is seen on a street corner juxtaposed by Stone with a typical business man. Gekko calls attention to this and comments to Fox, "look at that. You're gonna tell me the difference between this guy and that guy is luck?"[129] Here Gekko's explicit comment seems to be about the merits of hard work, rather than a belief in luck. However, this scene also indicates that not only is Stone aware of the socio-political climate of New York at this time, but that there exists completely different simultaneous experiences of the city. These notions are equally displayed in *Brightness Falls* and

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127. Ellis, BE. *American Psycho*. London: Picador. 1991.
128. Smith, N. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the revanchist City*. London: Routledge. 1996.
129. Stone, O. 34mins, 42secs.

American Psycho, to a much greater extent, with the homeless population occupying a far more visible position in the novels, and thus in the city.

In *Brightness Falls* the character of Ace, a homeless man that Corrine Calloway is acquainted with due to her volunteer work at a soup kitchen, is present as a significant figure in relation to a subplot interwoven with Jeff Pierce's drug use.[130] His appearance throughout the novel is used to provide a subtle indication that there are differing ways to understand, experience and construct the same spaces in the city. This is particularly evident during scenes when characters are depicted in places they wouldn't necessarily be expected to visit.[131] Throughout *American Psycho* members of the homeless population are placed outside the same clubs and restaurants that the protagonists visit. Again, this demonstrates that the same geography can be used by different people for different reasons. The visibility outside of a club is used by Bateman and his friends as a social tool to demonstrate popularity, wealth and status, the same premise of visibility is used by the homeless population as a way of getting noticed in order to (hopefully) get some money from the rich patrons of the places. This example most explicitly demonstrates the notion that although various people inhabit the same spaces the meanings behind doing so are very different, and consequently the experience and understanding of them differs dramatically; thus the same city, or even minute area of the city, exists as a series of layers of fictional constructed produced by the varying occupants.

One of the underlying issues that is acutely present throughout the analysis is that of the degrees of fictionality that exist within the texts, and what impact this has on the notion of the fictional constructs of cities. These levels of fictions not only refer to the characters and plots, but also to authorship. In relation to *Wall Street* it is important to

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130. For a more detailed explanation of the novel's plot and subplots see Appendix B.
131. Such as Corrine at the Tompkins square park riot, McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 397-399. Ace in Corrine's home, McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 16-18. Jeff in Reagantown, McInerney, J. 1992. pp. 85-88.

remain aware that both the story and film's production rely upon a team effort that extends beyond the (already complicated) duo of director and cast, to include producers, art directors, camera operators and sound technicians, amongst others. The important issue when it comes to the novels is to maintain recognition of the separation of author and product: the protagonists in novels should not be confused with the writer, nor should their thoughts, actions or experiences be assumed to be shared.[132]

American Psycho provides the most explicit examples of the layering of fictionality. There are several points throughout the novel where it remains unclear whether Patrick Bateman actually experiences things, or whether he makes them up, this is especially true when it comes to the murders he commits, as is demonstrated by his return to Paul Owen's apartment only to discover a pristine space with no evidence of the slaughtered prostitutes he left behind.[133] Similarly at points throughout the narrative Bateman slips certain phrases such as "pan out", "cut to" and "panning down"[134] which are suggestive of the events being part of an elaborate film plot, within a novel.[135] At one point Bateman openly comments that he is, "unable to maintain a credible public persona."[136] These factors illustrate how deeply potential layers of fictions can be embedded within the texts, and subsequently within the construction of the city by it's occupants. The ways in which the individual relates to the spaces that they inhabit, and the meanings they place upon them based upon private understanding and experience provides for a very individual specific construction of the city. As the texts demonstrate, though the same spaces in the city are used and occupied, even by people from similar cultural

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[132] Although, as in *Brightness Falls*, the experience of the author may inform the writing.
133. Ellis, BE. 1991, pp. 352-356.
134. Ellis, BE. 1991. pp. 4, 5, 59, 85, 191.
135. For a more detailed discussion of the "fictional" existence of Patrick Bateman see Young, E. "The Beast in the Jungle, the Figure in the Carpet." In, Young, E and Graham Caveney. *Shopping In Space: Essays on "Blank Generation" Fiction*. London: Serpent's Tail. 2002. pp. 85-123.
136. Ellis, BE. 1991. p. 285.

backgrounds, the produced urban and architectural relationship is very different: the city *is* many cities, on an individual level.

It is pertinent at this point to recapitulate the tactics used in the fictions to construct the space of New York City. Essentially there are three different factors that provide the basis for the protagonists understanding of space: the flow of information,[137] the emerging merging of public and private areas,[138] and spaceless cataloging.[139] Underlying these aspects of spatial understanding is the trope of visibility, which significant impacts how space is related to in all three fictions.

The construction of space according to how information is received and then used provides for the specific geographic understanding of New York in *Wall Street*. As Gekko comments, "the most valuable commodity I know of is information,"[140] and this is echoed in how he understands the city, it is a series of places that exist as a way of gathering the knowledge he requires. Whether these spaces are restaurants, changing rooms at a health club, or a boardroom is inconsequential, as long as Gekko can use them for his own gain. Therefore the space and architecture of the city for Gekko is an incomplete mapping of interiors and certain views that are jumped between. These spaces only become a comprehensive geography when united by Gekko according to the information gleaned from their occupation.

Brightness Falls similarly relies upon the interchangeability of spaces, and the finite mapping that is produced as a consequence. However, the focus in this fiction is on the merging of public space with private and domestic space, and the understanding of space that is produced by the social relationships within these places. The protagonists understanding and mapping of the city is based upon the correlation

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[137] As seen in *Wall Street*.
[138] As seen in *Brightness Falls*.
[139] As seen in *American Psycho*.
[140] Stone, O. 30mins, 21secs.

between social interaction and domestic interiors: the architecture of the city, in terms of clubs, restaurants and houses, is extremely important, but only when coupled with who is occupying them.

New York in *American Psycho* is constructed according to the popular club and restaurant spaces occupied by the protagonists. These exist as fragmentary places that are seemingly without a context for the characters beyond the Zagat guide. Therefore the construction of the city of New York by Patrick Bateman becomes one based on an episodic cartography of disjointed locations, a situation that simultaneously highlights and impacts his own psychotic disjunctions.

As is evident in all three of these constructions of the city, visibility is a fundamental aspect of an understanding of New York during this period. In *Wall Street* visibility and invisibility are essential to the continual flow of information that is central to the protagonists understanding of the space and architecture of New York. In *Brightness Falls* the inherent visibility of social interaction is the foundation of the Calloway's construction of their city. Finally, *American Psycho* illustrates the essence of the importance of visibility in 1980s New York: everything is about what can be seen, designer labels, the social group the characters occupy, the clubs and restaurants attend. This also highlights something that is present in each of the three narratives, the importance of being seated in the right area of a restaurant. It is a common theme in that the characters in all three fictions must be seated at tables that provide the right level of visibility.

The prevailing motif of visibility in the fictions, and the subsequent impact of this on the understandings of space that are present in the texts, demonstrates the influence of socio-cultural factors on the constructions of city cartography by individuals. The yuppie culture in the 1980s, and the resulting focus on superficial aspects such as fashion, lead to a social climate based on visibility. This, as the texts demonstrate, became so

imbedded in the collective subconscious that it impacts all levels of the individuals relationship with their cultural surroundings, including their mapping of space.

Although exploring the construction of New York City in the 1980s through fiction does not provide an "objective" study of individuals' experiences of the city, this by no means makes it any less legitimate as a way of exploring the space of the city. As Chris Barker points out, "there is no unmediated access to 'the real',"[141] no account of the city, whether its an interview, a fiction or a film, can be considered objective. Indeed as Westwood and Williams state, the 'real" and the fictive are continually woven together throughout intertextual discourse and, "these 'texts' are complex cultural products which form part of the ways we talk about ourselves."[142] The exploration of the space and construction of the city as presented in literary and cinematic fictions provides a different perspective on the alternative cartographies that are being mapped by individuals.

The study of fictional accounts of New York City highlights how various constructions of the same place can coexist. They also demonstrate more explicitly that social experiences and psychic understandings of the city create an individual mapping that challenges the conventional grid cartography of New York. Literary and cinematic narratives of the city portray the way that individuals often understand the city according to non-linear spaces, ephemeral locations or places and with reference to objects and interiors rather than spaces and architecture, thus demonstrating the notion that the city exists as and within layers of fictions, on both a textual and geographic level.

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[141] Barker, C. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage. 2003. p. 371.
[142] Westwood, S and John Williams, pp.12-13.

Appendix A.

Wall Street – An overview.

Cast:

Charlie Sheen	...	Bud Fox. (Broker, protagonist.)
Michael Douglas	...	Gordon Gekko. ("Raider" Financial mogul, Fox's idol.)
Martin Sheen	...	Carl Fox. (Fox's father, Union Rep for Bluestar Airlines.)
Terrance Stamp	...	Sir Larry Wildman. (Rival raider.)
James Spader	...	Roger Barnes. (College friend of Fox, Lawyer.)
Leslie Lyles	...	Natalie. (Gekko's secretary.)
Daryl Hannah	...	Darien. (Gekko's mistress/Fox's girlfriend.)

Plot Overview:

Bud Fox works as an account executive for Jackson, Steiner, trading in shares on the New York Stock Exchange. He longs to work for Gordon Gekko, a notoriously successful financial raider. He calls Gekko's secretary Natalie everyday attempting to get an interview or meeting with Gekko. Fox is struggling to pay his bills at the beginning of the film and so visits his father, Carl Fox, in Queens in order to borrow money. Whilst visiting Carl, Fox learns of a court ruling that will put Bluestar, the airline for whom his father is a union representative, back into business with the bigger carriers.

The next day, Gekko's birthday, Fox secures a meeting with him by bringing him hard to obtain cigars as a present. Whilst in the meeting Fox mentions his information about Bluestar as a way of impressing Gekko with information he may not be aware of, despite it technically being insider trading. Gekko is impressed and takes on Fox. His initiation of Fox involves him gaining inside information about a takeover bid by a fellow raider, Sir Larry Wildman. Through this experience, and the financial rewards Gekko provides as a result of his success. Fox learns the value of insider trading and begins to find different ways of getting information, including asking a lawyer friend from college to help him, and joining a maintenance firm in order to gain access to important offices at night. Fox now earns enough money both to pay back his father and entertain his new girlfriend Darien Taylor, a former mistress of Gekko and an interior designer.

The climax of the film comes when Fox suggests a takeover of Bluestar airlines, with the notion of turning the company around and making it more successful. Gekko agrees, only to then betray Fox's confidence and decide to liquidate the company once he has the support of the union representatives that will allow him turn over a greater profit. Fox learns about Gekko's plans coincidentally and is furious about the betrayal. In an act of revenge he returns to Wildman and prompts him to corrupt the deal and buy the company himself with the promise that he will commit to it's turnaround.

These events lead to the discovery of Fox's insider trading by the SEC, and so although at the close of the film Fox has done the right thing in terms of rescuing Bluestar, his actions may still result in him going to prison. The films ends ambiguously; Fox meets with Gekko to secretly tape a conversation about how Gekko taught him everything he knows about insider trading, however Fox must still appear in court and it is unclear whether Gekko will also be implicated and charged.

Appendix B.

Brightness Falls – An overview.

Principle Characters:

Russell Calloway	...	Protagonist.
Corrine Calloway	...	Married to Russell.
Jeff Pierce	...	Close friend of the Calloways.
Ace.	...	Homeless man.
Harold Stone	...	Chief editor at Corbin, Dern Publishers,
Trina Cox	...	In Mergers and Acquisitions for Silverman.
Washington Lee	...	Friend of Russell's, editor for Corbin, Dern.
David Whitlock	...	Financier for Corbin, Dern.)
Bernie Melman	...	Finance mogul, funds the takeover of Corbin, Dern.
Tish Corbin	...	Shareholder of Corbin, Dern. her family's company.)
Victor Propp	...	Author, published by Corbin, Dern.

Plot Overview:

Russell and Corrine Calloway are a married couple who met whilst at college. Russell is an editor with Corbin, Dern and Company Publishers. Corrine works as an investment banker, and volunteers at a soup kitchen. Their mutual best friend Jeff Pierce is an author commissioned by Corbin, Dern who, as a result of his success, has slipped into drug use.

Russell is unsatisfied with his progress at Corbin, Dern and, with some prompting by author Victor Propp, decides that he will attempt a hostile takeover. He approaches Tish Corbin, who, dissatisfied with how the family have sidelined her, offers her shares in the company as leverage. He contacts Trina Cox, an aquaintence from college, in order to ask her help with the financial specifics. She subsequently gets in touch with Bernie Melman a notorious financial mogul, to get financial and political backing. Russell at this point also gets two of his friends, who are also colleagues, to back his plan, David Whitlock and Washington Lee.

Corrine, in the meantime, is struggling with an eating disorder and the wish for a child. She is increasingly sceptical about Russell's plan to take over Corbin, Dern and becomes increasingly withdrawn. The tension that results from this and Russell's new social life with Trina, Washington and Whitlock and Melman only enhance the Calloway's already difficult marital life. Corrine discovers she is pregnant, but miscarries and this only serves to increase their relationships decline. At this point, just as Corrine had left her job due to dissatisfaction, the stock market crash occurs and signals a general decline across the novel.

Russell is unfaithful to Corrine, with Trina, during a trip to Europe. Corrine finds out and flees New York. Russell returns and is greeted by Corrine's departure and the news that Melman is pulling out of the takeover, and thus it is no longer a viable option. He too attempts leaving New York in order to deal with the separation from Corrine, and start afresh in California, but it doesn't really suit him.

Corrine, meanwhile, has returned to New York and one night manages to find herself with Ace during the Thompkins Square riot. He rescues her from a violent group of police, but is disappointed when Corrine refuses to sleep with him. It is discovered later that he has died in circumstances related to AIDS.

It is at the end of the novel that the subplot revolving around Jeff Pierce, comes to the fore. Earlier in the narrative, his drug addiction having been discovered on separate occasions by both Russell and Corrine, an intervention is made involving all of his friends and his parents and he is sent to a rehabilitation unit. Upon being released he visits Russell to apologise to him and admit to an affair with Corrine before the marriage. Soon after these revelations occur Corrine calls Russell to inform him that Jeff has died, presumably of complications due to AIDS, and that he should return to New York. The novel ends with Corrine and Russell reunited, with a novel having been left for them by Jeff to be posthumously published.

Appendix C.

American Psycho – An overview.

Principle Characters:

Patrick Bateman	...	Narrator.
Tim Price	...	Friend/Colleague.
Courtney Lawrence	...	Girlfriend of Luis, also seeing Patrick.
Luis Carruthers	...	Friend/Colleague.
David Van Patten	...	Friend/Colleague.
Craig McDermott	...	Friend/Colleague.
Paul Owen	...	Aquaintance, murdered by Patrick.
Evelyn	...	Patrick's girlfriend.
Jean	...	Patrick's secretary.
Marcus Halberstam	...	Broker for whom Patrick is often mistaken.

Plot Overview:

The narrative is presented in the first person by Patrick Bateman, a Wall Street broker, who, coming from a wealthy family, doesn't need to work, but does so in order to fit in. The novel is almost plot less, instead it follows Bateman's attempts to eat in the best restaurants and attend the best clubs in New York, the undercurrent to which being that he is a serial killer. A fact that continually goes unnoticed, no matter how extreme or overt his actions. The implications of this being either that his actions are fictional, or that 1980s yuppie culture is so concerned with surface that as long as Bateman appears to "fit in" with the fashion and social trends, his other actions go unnoticed. This is enhanced throughout the novel by the continual theme of his closest friends continually failing to recognise each other, or those around them, this being made particularly explicit through Bateman's continually being mistaken for Marcus Halberstam, an action which subsequently allows him to assume this identity in order to successfully murder Paul Owen.

The novel opens with a party held by Patrick's girlfriend Evelyn, which is also attended by Tim Price. Soon after this Patrick and his male friends attend a club called Tunnel, at which Tim disappears down a set of train tracks leading into a tunnel which are assumed to be simply a decorative feature of the club.

Patrick's psychopathic nature gradually reveals itself with him crimes escalating from killing homeless people and their dogs, to Evelyn's neighbour, the torture and death of female prostitutes and an ex-girlfriend, all of which go unnoticed. Finally Patrick decides to kill Paul Owen, a rival Wall Streeter. He does so by luring him to dinner using the identity of Marcus Halberstam, the name by which Owen has been referring to him throughout the novel. He murders Owen in his apartment, and dumps the body in Hell's Kitchen, subsequently using Owen's apartment as storage for the bodies of girls he kills later in the novel. He leaves a message on Owen's answer machine, pretending to be him, explaining he has gone to Europe. Although Owen's disappearance is investigated by a Detective Kimball, nothing comes of the investigation, and it is increasingly suggested in the narrative that Owen is still alive and actually *has* been seen in London. Similarly, towards the end of the novel, as Bateman's personality becomes more extremely unhinged and his actions more violent he leaves a message on his laywer's answering machine confessing to his crimes. However, upon meeting him in person his lawyer just laughs, mistakes Patrick for someone else who has pulled a practical joke and comments that it wasn't convincing because Bateman is too much of a boy-next-door type to do such things. The novel ends, therefore, with Patrick remaining unpunished for the crimes he might have committed, and the group around him still oblivious.

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