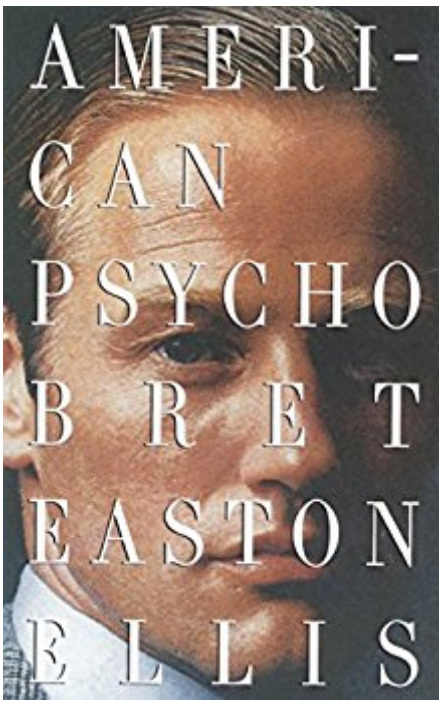
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American Psycho (Vintage Contemporaries)



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Synopsis

The modern classic,Ã Â the basis ofÃ Â a Broadway musical, and major motion picture from Lion's Gate Films starring Christian Bale, Chloe Sevigny, Jared Leto, and Reese Witherspoon, and directed by Mary Harron.In American Psycho, Bret Easton Ellis imaginatively explores the incomprehensible depths of madness and captures the insanity of violence in our time or any other. Patrick Bateman moves among the young and trendy in 1980s Manhattan. Young, handsome, and well educated, Bateman earns his fortune on Wall Street by day while spending his nights in ways we cannot begin to fathom. Expressing his true self through torture and murder, Bateman prefigures an apocalyptic horror that no society could bear to confront.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"American Psycho" has a good deal of literary merit, offering readers a fascinating look at a serial killer relating his own experiences and insecurities. It is neither misogynistic garbage nor is it a mere series of gruesome killings from cover to cover. In fact, I tested both of these theories. First of all, I took a body count. Counting deaths that occur in the present of the story -- any references to past

killings or mutilations did not count -- my final count was seven men and seven women killed. On the other hand, the killings of women take much longer. Rather than quote from the book, here's an inventory: p. 217, Bethany, nail gun, scissors, dead; p. 290: Elizabeth and Christie, butcher knife, two dead; pp. 304-305: Tori and Tiffani, skinned one alive, burst the other's eyeballs with match, two dead; p. 328: inserts starved rat in girl's vagina, one dead; page 344: girl killed, made into sausage and meat loaf.So it's gory, but Ellis is not completely hopeless. It takes him until p. 131 of his 399-page book to get to the first major act of violence, and until p. 166 to get to his first actual killing (both of which, by the way, are men, apparently a deliberate ploy to make the book look even-handed in its treatment of the sexes.) Before that first killing and in between the subsequent ones, there is some very funny parody of 1980s culture, and Ellis is dead on target. The call-waiting/answering machine culture takes its share of shots, as well as trash television. A running joke in the book is Bateman's favorite talk show, which discusses topics as diverse as dwarf tossing and home abortion kits.There is a marvelous, if unappetizing, scene where Bateman steals a urinal cake from a restaurant bathroom, coats it in chocolate, wraps it in a Godiva box, and has it delivered to his girlfriend as they dine together in a fancy restaurant. She eats it, refusing to admit how awful it is because it came in a Godiva box. "I adore Godiva," she says, not understanding why Bateman won't join in. It's a very funny and shocking jab at people who see the label rather than the product. She gags, forcing it down, saying, "It's just so minty."Bateman is constantly telling his friends what he does, but they are all so wrapped up in themselves that they don't hear him or don't believe what he's saying. After feeding his girlfriend the urinal cake, he tells her quite openly that "My need to engage in homicidal behavior on a massive scale cannot be, um, corrected." She responds to his admission by saying "Patrick, if you're going to start in again on why I should have breast implants, I'm leaving." Bateman calls another character and leaves a long, detailed admission of guilt on his answering machine. The man responds, "Bateman killing Owen and the escort girl? Oh, that's bloody marvelous!", forgetting about the "joke" immediately. It's black humor, and pretty funny at that.The funniest three chapters in the book are the "musical group" chapters, in which the narrator suddenly spends a few pages discussing one of his favorite singers or bands. Being a vapid soul, he likes only the most vapid bands; Huey Lewis and the News, Whitney Houston and Genesis are the three bands he discusses in the book. By taking these pop bands so seriously, so analytically, Ellis succeeds in showing just how soulless and transparent these bands are.

It's almost like this whole book can be summarized in one sentence: the show must go on. Or, you

could say it like this, life is going on. Or, misery is going on. Whatever is the flavor of your constant. And, I mean, I'm starting lyrical here, but this is about to turn dark and bloody, so consider yourself warned. If you're the fainting kind, better not read this review or the book itself, but if you're notÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| prepare for brilliance. Yes, people say there is too much violence here, yes it's graphic, yes the things the main character does are horrific, unacceptable, impossible to imagine, but don't read into it too much, it only serves as a background for a larger picture. This book is, really, about invisibility. You'd think me insane for saying this, but it's how I felt. We've created the world where we've protected ourselves from the pain by turning invisible. I mean, we smile to each other and say hello and how are you and stuff, but we don't mean it. We've been hurt too much, we hide behind beautiful well mannered facades, we see someone die, shrug and pretend like we didn't see it, moving on, worrying about ourselves, about our own clean little world, and rendering what we don't want to see, well, invisible.But what if it's not something, but someone? What if someone is crying out for help, starting out small, and then growing bolder and bolder, going to an extreme to be noticed, to be heard, to be understood, and, ultimately, to be loved? Enter Patrick Bateman. Stunning, perfect, rich, admirable, everything every girl wants, yet crying out to be seen for who he is, seeking solace in details, obsessive details, in everything, because, in a way, it's his sanity, only he finds no happiness in it, it's getting worse and worse and worse. And worse. He's majorly failing on one account, really, finding someone who would share that with him, and he can't. You have probably read the summary of the book so you know that Pat Bateman is a serial killer and a Wall Street businessman, and you wonder how am I able to talk about him like that, but that's who he is. He's plagued with desperation, riddled with pain, excreting pain that he pushed so fast deep inside himself, he's only able to feel it when torturing others, seeing it on their faces, gradually losing even that, going to bigger and bigger extremes. AndÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| and what, you ask. AndÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| go read it. Try to read through the violent parts with this in mind, but read the whole thing. There is a generation in there. It was my generation too, though I'm originally from Russia. But I got it, it's the same, it's all the same, for everyone, in the world as it is now, and I think this is a brilliant book, and I will reread it probably many times. Wow, just wow.

This is hands down one of my favorite books. My first time reading it, it admittedly worsened my depression, whereas de Sade could barely move me. This is the tale of a man spiraling into madness, while at the same time brutalizing countless women and flaunting narcissistic traits. Sometimes he could even be relatable (wanting to fit in and succeed). Other times, he was a cad with great one liners. I also appreciated that the people in the story often confused someone for

someone else, which in turn affected his mental state.The author was also good at showing the decline in his sanity with his prose (anyone who has read the book should recall that giant run on sentence). It felt very involved in ways I cannot explain. Even his narcissism got some attention in...I admit that it made for dry reading to delve into his hobbies and bodily upkeep in such details, but it helps to paint a picture.

10/10Great stuff.The New York Times calls it a "playful and mysterious dish."A laugh-riot!End apartheid.Table for 2 at Dorsia.

On the surface it seems like a standard thriller book, but this book is MUCH deeper than that. It's about consumerism, superficiality, narcissism, and maybe even a little bit of history on 1980's NYC culture. Have seen the movie a few times (which is also great) but the book is much more graphic and suspenseful.

This is an excellent read filled with poignancy and disquieting insight into the sociopathic culture of the upper echelon business world in which the main character operates. The sociological aspects of this book are just as important as the psychological sketch Ellis performs of a psychopathic, affluent businessman, Patrick Bateman.

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