

bret ellis american psycho

bret ellis american psycho is a groundbreaking novel that has left an indelible mark on contemporary literature and pop culture. Written by Bret Easton Ellis and published in 1991, the book explores themes of consumerism, identity, and the darkness lurking beneath the surface of 1980s Manhattan. As a provocative and controversial work, *American Psycho* delves into the mind of Patrick Bateman, a wealthy investment banker who leads a double life as a serial killer. This article provides a comprehensive overview of *American Psycho*, analyzing its themes, characters, impact, and legacy, making it an essential read for fans of dark satire and psychological thrillers.

Overview of Bret Ellis American Psycho

Introduction to the Novel

American Psycho is a satirical novel set in Manhattan during the late 1980s, a period characterized by excess, materialism, and superficiality. The story is narrated by Patrick Bateman, a young professional who embodies the yuppie culture of the era. The novel's narrative style is notable for its detached tone, blending detailed descriptions of luxury with graphic depictions of violence.

Publication and Reception

When it was first published, *American Psycho* sparked widespread controversy due to its explicit content and brutal violence. Critics debated whether it was a critique of yuppie culture or an endorsement of its excesses. Over time, the novel has gained recognition as a significant work of literary satire, appreciated for its sharp social commentary and narrative innovation.

Themes Explored in American Psycho

Consumerism and Materialism

One of the central themes of *American Psycho* is the obsession with surface appearances and material possessions. Patrick Bateman's life revolves around brand names, fashionable clothing, and luxurious dining, reflecting the consumer-driven culture of the 1980s. The novel critiques how consumerism can lead to superficiality and moral decay.

Identity and Alienation

Bateman's identity is fragmented, and he struggles with feelings of emptiness and detachment. The novel explores how the obsession with appearances and social status can lead to a loss of authentic self, resulting in alienation and psychological instability.

Violence and Morality

The graphic violence depicted in the novel raises questions about morality, empathy, and the nature of evil. Ellis portrays Bateman's violent acts with clinical detachment, prompting readers to consider whether this reflects a critique of violence in society or an exploration of psychological pathology.

The Duality of Human Nature

American Psycho examines the duality of human nature—the facade of civility versus the primal instincts lurking beneath. Bateman's outward appearance as a successful professional contrasts sharply with his violent inner life, illustrating the masks people wear.

Character Analysis

Patrick Bateman

The protagonist, Patrick Bateman, epitomizes the yuppie archetype—wealthy, fashionable, and superficial. His obsession with appearance and status masks a dark, violent psyche. Key traits include:

- Narcissism
- Psychopathy
- Detachment from reality
- Obsession with perfection and control

Supporting Characters

The novel features a cast of characters who embody the superficiality of 1980s Manhattan:

- Evelyn: Bateman's girlfriend, obsessed with appearances.
- Paul Allen: A colleague and victim of Bateman's violence.
- Luis Carruthers: A subordinate, representing the social hierarchy.
- Timothy Price: Bateman's friend, a wealthy peer.

Literary Style and Narrative Technique

Detached Narration

Ellis employs a cold, detached narrative voice that mirrors Bateman's emotional numbness. This tone heightens the unsettling effect of the violence and superficiality depicted.

Satire and Irony

The novel is rich with irony, often highlighting the absurdity of the yuppie lifestyle. Ellis satirizes the obsession with status symbols and the moral vacuity of the era.

Graphic Descriptions

American Psycho is notorious for its explicit content. The detailed descriptions of violence serve to shock and provoke thought, blurring the line between satire and horror.

Impact and Legacy of American Psycho

Controversy and Censorship

Upon release, American Psycho faced bans and censorship due to its graphic violence and sexual content. Despite this, it gained a cult following and critical acclaim.

Cultural Influence

The novel has influenced numerous works in literature, film, and pop culture. Its portrayal of excess and psychopathy has become a reference point for discussions about the dark side of capitalism.

Film Adaptation

In 2000, Mary Harron directed a film adaptation starring Christian Bale as Patrick Bateman. The movie retained much of the novel's dark humor and social critique, further cementing American Psycho's place in popular culture.

Academic and Literary Analysis

Scholars have examined American Psycho from various angles:

- As a critique of 1980s capitalism
- A commentary on identity and alienation
- An example of postmodern literature

Why Read American Psycho Today?

Understanding Cultural Critique

Reading American Psycho offers insight into the excesses of the 1980s and the psychological toll of consumer culture.

Exploring Human Psyche

The novel delves into the complexities of mental health, morality, and the duality of human nature.

Appreciating Literary Innovation

Ellis's narrative style and satirical techniques make American Psycho a compelling example of postmodern literature.

Discussion on Morality and Ethics

The book challenges readers to reflect on societal values and the boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Key Points to Remember About American Psycho

- It's a satirical critique of 1980s yuppie culture.
- The protagonist, Patrick Bateman, is a complex character embodying superficiality and psychopathy.
- The novel explores themes of consumerism, identity, violence, and morality.
- Its narrative style is characterized by detached tone and irony.
- The book faced controversy but is now recognized as an important work of literature.
- The 2000 film adaptation stars Christian Bale and captures the novel's dark humor.

Conclusion

American Psycho by Bret Easton Ellis remains a provocative, thought-provoking novel that challenges readers to confront the darker aspects of human nature and society. Its sharp social commentary, complex characters, and innovative narrative technique make it a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the intersection of capitalism, identity, and morality. Whether as a work of satire, horror, or psychological exploration, American Psycho continues to resonate and inspire critical discussions decades after its publication.

Meta Description: Discover an in-depth analysis of Bret Ellis' American Psycho, exploring its themes, characters, impact, and legacy. A must-read guide to one of the most controversial novels of the 20th century.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Bret Easton Ellis's 'American Psycho'?

The novel explores themes of superficiality, materialism, and the dark side of the 1980s yuppie culture, highlighting issues of identity, sanity, and violence.

How does 'American Psycho' reflect the culture of 1980s America?

It satirizes the obsession with wealth, appearance, and status prevalent among the yuppie class, portraying a society obsessed with material possessions and superficial success.

What is the significance of Patrick Bateman's character in 'American Psycho'?

Patrick Bateman embodies the emptiness and moral depravity of the era's consumer-driven culture, serving as a critique of narcissism and dehumanization.

Has 'American Psycho' faced any controversies or censorship?

Yes, due to its explicit violent content and graphic scenes, the novel has been banned and challenged in various places, sparking debates on censorship and freedom of expression.

How does the film adaptation of 'American Psycho' compare to the book?

The film, starring Christian Bale, captures the dark satire and psychological horror of the

book but visually emphasizes certain themes differently, leading to ongoing discussions about its interpretation.

What are some symbolic elements in 'American Psycho'?

Symbols such as the detached descriptions of luxury items, the violence, and the protagonist's obsession with appearance serve to critique societal superficiality and moral decay.

Why is 'American Psycho' considered a cult classic?

Its provocative content, sharp social commentary, and unique narrative style have made it an influential and controversial work that continues to spark discussion.

How does Bret Easton Ellis develop Patrick Bateman's character throughout the novel?

The novel presents Bateman as a complex, unreliable narrator whose superficial charm masks his psychopathic tendencies, revealing layers of alienation and moral detachment.

What impact did 'American Psycho' have on Bret Easton Ellis's career?

The novel established Ellis as a provocative voice in contemporary literature, though it also brought significant controversy and media attention to his work.

Are there any notable literary influences on 'American Psycho'?

Yes, the novel draws inspiration from classic works of satire, horror, and psychological fiction, as well as contemporary critiques of consumerism and materialism.

Additional Resources

Bret Easton Ellis American Psycho: An In-Depth Analysis of a Cultural Phenomenon

In the realm of contemporary American literature, few novels have sparked as much controversy, debate, and scholarly interest as Bret Easton Ellis American Psycho. Published in 1991, this provocative novel offers a chilling portrayal of 1980s yuppie culture through the lens of Patrick Bateman, a Manhattan investment banker with a dark, psychopathic alter ego. Its visceral content, satirical tone, and social commentary have cemented it as a defining work of postmodern fiction, provoking discussions on consumerism, identity, and morality.

Understanding the Context of American Psycho

The Cultural and Historical Backdrop

To fully grasp the significance of Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho*, it is essential to situate it within its historical context. The novel is set during the late 1980s, a period characterized by economic prosperity, material excess, and a burgeoning obsession with appearances. The era's culture of greed and superficiality provides the perfect environment for the novel's themes to flourish.

- Yuppie Culture: The protagonist, Patrick Bateman, epitomizes the image of the successful young professional obsessed with fashion, status, and material possessions.
- Consumerism: The novel critiques the obsession with brand names and the superficial pursuit of happiness through consumption.
- Moral Ambiguity: The 1980s was a time of moral ambiguity, where greed was often celebrated, and the line between right and wrong was blurred.

Analyzing the Main Themes of *American Psycho*

1. Consumerism and Materialism

At its core, *American Psycho* is a biting satire of 1980s materialism.

- Brand Obsession: Characters are obsessed with designer labels like Armani, Ralph Lauren, and Valentino. The narrative often details their clothing, accessories, and lifestyle choices.
- Surface Over Substance: The emphasis on appearances suggests that superficial qualities are valued more than authenticity or morality.
- Critique of Capitalism: The novel exposes how consumer culture commodifies identities and dehumanizes individuals.

2. Identity and Alienation

Patrick Bateman's identity is fluid and often ambiguous.

- Loss of Self: Bateman's obsession with appearances extends to his own identity, which seems detached from genuine emotion.
- Duality: The novel explores the duality of human nature—Bateman's outward charm versus his violent impulses.
- Alienation: The characters often feel disconnected from their emotions and from each other, a reflection of the superficial social interactions prevalent in their world.

3. Violence and Morality

The novel's graphic violence serves as a stark critique.

- Extreme Violence: Scenes of murder are detailed and shocking, forcing readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the characters' psychopathy.
- Moral Vacuum: The characters' indifference to morality highlights a society desensitized to violence and ethical considerations.
- Satire of Masculinity: The brutality can also be read as a critique of toxic masculinity and

the violence it fosters.

4. The Unreliable Narrator

Patrick Bateman's perspective is central to the novel's ambiguity.

- Subjectivity: His narration is often ambiguous, blurring the line between reality and hallucination.
- Unreliability: This narrative choice heightens the novel's themes of perception, authenticity, and madness.

The Writing Style and Literary Techniques

Postmodern Approach

American Psycho employs a postmodern style characterized by:

- Fragmented Narrative: The novel shifts between detailed descriptions, dialogues, and internal monologues.
- Dark Humor and Satire: Ellis uses irony and sarcasm to critique the superficial culture.
- Intertextuality: References to pop culture, music, and fashion serve to ground the narrative in its era.

Graphic Content as a Literary Device

Ellis does not shy away from explicit violence, which functions as:

- Shock Tactics: To provoke discomfort and force reflection.
- Symbolism: The brutality symbolizes the emptiness and moral decay of the characters' lives.
- Social Critique: Highlighting the desensitization of society to violence.

Controversies and Critical Reception

Initial Reception

When American Psycho was first published, it faced significant backlash due to its graphic content.

- Banned and Censored: Some editions were censored or banned in various countries.
- Mixed Reviews: Critics praised its sharp satire but condemned its violent scenes.

Literary Significance

Over time, critics have recognized American Psycho as:

- A masterful critique of 1980s consumer culture.

- A groundbreaking work of postmodern fiction.
- An exploration of the darker aspects of human psychology.

Ethical and Moral Debates

The novel continues to spark debates regarding:

- Freedom of expression versus harmful content.
- The portrayal of violence and its impact.
- The line between satire and exploitation.

The Adaptation and Cultural Impact

The 2000 Film

Directed by Mary Harron, the 2000 film adaptation starring Christian Bale brought *American Psycho* to a wider audience.

- Faithful yet Distinct: The film captures the novel's satire but tones down some of the graphic violence.
- Cultural Icon: Christian Bale's portrayal of Bateman became iconic, influencing pop culture.

Influence on Media and Literature

American Psycho has influenced:

- Films, music videos, and fashion photography that critique consumerist culture.
- Other literary works exploring themes of identity and violence.
- Discussions about the societal effects of materialism and superficiality.

Final Thoughts: Why *American Psycho* Matters

Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho* remains a vital, if controversial, work that forces readers to confront uncomfortable truths about modern society. Its layered narrative, sharp social commentary, and provocative content make it a compelling study of American culture at the end of the 20th century.

While the novel's explicit violence and dark satire may not be for everyone, its significance lies in its ability to challenge perceptions and spark critical discourse. It serves as both a mirror and a critique of a society obsessed with appearances, wealth, and power—reminding us that beneath the surface, darker impulses often lurk.

Key Takeaways

- American Psycho is a satirical critique of 1980s consumerism and superficiality.
- The novel explores themes of identity, morality, and alienation through the character of Patrick Bateman.
- Its graphic content serves as a symbolic device to critique societal desensitization.
- The work's postmodern style emphasizes narrative ambiguity and cultural references.
- Its controversial nature has sparked ongoing debates about censorship, artistic freedom, and societal values.

Whether viewed as a cautionary tale, a work of horror, or a social critique, Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho* continues to resonate and provoke discussion decades after its publication.

Bret Ellis American Psycho

bret ellis american psycho: Bret Easton Ellis Naomi Mandel, 2010-11-18 This collection of critical essays on the American novelist Bret Easton Ellis examines the novels of his mature period: *American Psycho* (1991), *Glamorama* (1999), and *Lunar Park* (2005). Taking as its starting-point *American Psycho*'s seismic impact on contemporary literature and culture, the volume establishes Ellis' centrality to the scholarship and teaching of contemporary American literature in the U.S. and in Europe. Contributors examine the alchemy of acclaim and disdain that accrues to this controversial writer, provide an overview of growing critical material on Ellis and review the literary and artistic significance of his recent work. Exploring key issues including violence, literature, reality, reading, identity, genre, and gender, the contributors together provide a critical re-evaluation of Ellis, exploring how he has impacted, challenged, and transformed contemporary literature in the U.S. and abroad.

bret ellis american psycho: American Psycho Bret Easton Ellis, 2000 An international bestseller and true modern classic Patrick Bateman is twenty-six and works on Wall Street; he is handsome, sophisticated, charming and intelligent. He is also a psychopath. Taking us to a head-on collision with America's greatest dream – and its worst nightmare – *American Psycho* is a bleak, bitter, black comedy about a world we all recognize but do not wish to confront. Celebrating 40 years of outstanding international writing, this is one of the essential Picador novels reissued in a beautiful new series style.

bret ellis american psycho: Bret Easton Ellis's American Psycho Julian Murphet, 2002-01-11 This is part of a new series of guides to contemporary novels. The aim of the series is to give readers accessible and informative introductions to some of the most popular, most acclaimed and most influential novels of recent years - from 'The Remains of the Day' to 'White Teeth'. A team of contemporary fiction scholars from both sides of the Atlantic has been assembled to provide a thorough and readable analysis of each of the novels in question.

bret ellis american psycho: American Psycho Jason Huff, Mimi Cabell, 2012

bret ellis american psycho: American Psycho Bret Easton Ellis, 2014-12-15 Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* is one of the most controversial and talked-about novels of all time. A multi-million-copy bestseller hailed as a modern classic, it is a violent and outrageous black comedy about the darkest side of human nature. With an introduction by Irvine Welsh, author of *Trainspotting*. I like to dissect girls. Did you know I'm utterly insane? Patrick Bateman has it all: good looks, youth, charm, a job on Wall Street, and reservations at every new restaurant in town. He is also a psychopath. A man addicted to his superficial, perfect life, he pulls us into a dark underworld where the American Dream becomes a nightmare . . . Part of the Picador Collection, a series showcasing the best of modern literature.

bret ellis american psycho: *Violence and Consumerism in Bret Easton Ellis's "American Psycho" and Chuck Palahniuk's "Fight Club"* Michael Frank, 2009-11-08 Examination Thesis from the year 2009 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,5, University of Heidelberg, language: English, abstract: Art has always reflected society. [...] Fight Club examines violence and the roots of frustration that are causing people to reach out for such radical solutions. And that's exactly the sort of discussion we should be having about our culture. Because a culture that doesn't examine its violence is a culture in denial, which is much more dangerous. This assessment of Fight Club by Edward Norton, who plays the narrator in the novel's movie adaptation, explains the reasoning behind this thesis, which examines the basic principles of today's consumer culture, its connection to aggression and violence, and the way these topics are presented in two contemporary novels: Bret Easton Ellis's American Psycho and Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club. In these books, the respective protagonists face similar deadlocks connected to life in the consumerist world of the 1980s and 1990s. Despite, evidently, having everything a person could ask for, both main characters' lives remain unfulfilled, leaving them frustrated and dissatisfied. As it turns out, acts of violence become the only thing that lets them get away from the boredom of their daily routine and gives them a sense of satisfaction.

bret ellis american psycho: "Abandon All Hope" - consumerism and loss of identity in Bret Easton Ellis's "American Psycho" as an example of blank fiction Anja Schiel, 2008-04-23 Thesis (M.A.) from the year 2005 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,5, University of Hamburg (Sprach-, Literatur- und Medienwissenschaft), language: English, abstract: Bret Easton Ellis's American Psycho has been labeled many things from "Brat Pack Fiction" to "Generation X" to "Minimal Realism". While the classification of the novel might be difficult and it has often been misunderstood for its extremely violent scenes, what is clear to the attentive reader is its critique of consumer culture. Critics have acknowledged an emergence of a large number of writings dealing with this topic in contemporary American literature in the recent past. These novels focus on the relationship of American youth with consumer culture with a seemingly non-elaborate content and style. Attempts of explaining this kind of writing, which has also been called "fiction of insurgency", "new narrative", "downtown writing" and "punk fiction", range from millennial angst to the classification of this literary movement as part of the postmodern culture. What seems clear is that these narrations are closely related to the society they have been created in. The way these texts incorporate products of their time as a constant accompanying element places them very clearly in a specific time period. The apparent non-existence of complexity concerning the style, which at times reminds the reader of a movie script or a sequence of an MTV video, has, in the case of American Psycho, caused many critics to classify the novel as boring and deny the author the status of an artist. Exactly this seeming meaninglessness of these novels argues in favor of a term introduced by critics James Annesley and Elizabeth Young: Blank fiction, or Blank Generation Fiction. The term Blank fiction seems to capture perfectly the emptiness created by consumer culture that has found its way into these narratives not simply in its context but also by means of its language, incorporating consumer goods into the narrative as secondary characters, in the case of American Psycho ascribing more character to these objects than to the protagonists.

bret ellis american psycho: American Psycho Bret Easton Ellis, 1993 Een seriemoordenaar vertelt gedetailleerd over de moorden die hij pleegt en over zijn leven.

bret ellis american psycho: Lunar Park Bret Easton Ellis, 2006-08-29 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • From the New York Times bestselling author of American Psycho and Less Than Zero comes a chilling tale that combines reality, memoir, and fantasy to create a fascinating portrait of this most controversial writer but also a deeply moving novel about love and loss, parents and children, and ultimately forgiveness. "John Cheever writes The Shining." —Stephen King, Entertainment Weekly Bret Ellis, the narrator of Lunar Park, is the bestselling writer whose first novel Less Than Zero catapulted him to international stardom while he was still in college. In the years that followed he found himself adrift in a world of wealth, drugs, and fame, as well as dealing with the unexpected death of his abusive father. After a decade of decadence a chance for salvation

arrives; the chance to reconnect with an actress he was once involved with, and their son. But almost immediately his new life is threatened by a freak sequence of events and a bizarre series of murders that all seem to connect to Ellis's past. His attempts to save his new world from his own demons makes *Lunar Park* Ellis's most suspenseful novel. Look for Bret Easton Ellis's new novel, *The Shards*!

bret ellis american psycho: Mary Harron's movie adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis's "American Psycho". A feminist movie Tobias Utz, 2013-08-28 Seminar paper from the year 2013 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,0, Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, language: English, abstract: "I'm always shocked when people want to make movies out of my books. [...] They have cinematic scenes, they have a lot of dialogue, but often they don't have that narrative momentum a movie needs" (Shulman, par. 12), said Bret Easton Ellis, the author of the novel *American Psycho*, in an interview about movie adaptations of his books. Ellis wrote a total of seven novels and became one of the most famous authors of postmodern American literature. His third novel *American Psycho* was published in 1991 and turned into a movie in 2000 by Mary Harron. Yet, the missing narrative momentum Ellis mentioned was not Harron's only problem while adapting the novel. When *American Psycho* was published in 1991, it was not well received. Because of its extremely graphic scenes of violence and pornography the novel caused a chorus of outrage among critics. Female activist groups complained that it was "a how-to novel on the torture and dismemberment of women" (McDowell, par. 1). Ellis even received death threats and had to face furious outcries from women... Ellis was surprised that the novel provoked such reactions because he intended the novel to be a black comedy and a critique of the capitalist society in New York City in the 1980s. His intention was to decry the greed, envy and the urge for conformity present at Wall Street at that time. However, the satiric elements of his novel were almost completely overshadowed by the violent and pornographic passages which led many people to misinterpret the novel's message. The reactions to Mary Harron's movie adaptation of *American Psycho* were much friendlier: Watching *American Psycho* is like witnessing a bravura sleight-of-hand feat. In adapting Bret Easton Ellis's turgid, gory 1991 novel to the screen, the director Mary Harron has boiled a bloated stew of brand names and butchery into a lean and mean horror comedy classic. (Holden, par. 1) In view of this change of opinion from the novel to the movie adaptation, it is justified to take a closer look at how Harron adapted Ellis's novel. In the framework of the seminar Literature and Media: A Kaleidoscope, this paper analyzes the rehabilitation of the novel focusing on internal changes and the resulting changes in the effect on the audience. Mary Harron rehabilitated *American Psycho* by turning it into a feminist movie.

bret ellis american psycho: The Informers Bret Easton Ellis, 1995-08-01 From the New York Times bestselling author of *American Psycho* and *Less Than Zero* comes a nihilistic novel set in the early eighties that portrays a chilling descent into the abyss beneath L.A.'s gorgeous surfaces. • "Skillfully accomplishes its goal of depicting a modern moral wasteland.... Arguably Ellis's best." —The Boston Globe The basis of the major motion picture starring Billy Bob Thornton, Kim Basinger and Mickey Rourke, *The Informers* is a seductive and chillingly nihilistic novel, in which Bret Easton Ellis, returns to Los Angeles, the city whose moral badlands he portrayed so unforgettably in *Less Than Zero*. This time is the early eighties. The characters go to the same schools and eat at the same restaurants. Their voices enfold us as seamlessly as those of DJs heard over a car radio. They have sex with the same boys and girls and buy from the same dealers. In short, they are connected in the only way people can be in that city. Dirk sees his best friend killed in a desert car wreck, then rifles through his pockets for a last joint before the ambulance comes. Cheryl, a wannabe newscaster, chides her future stepdaughter, "You're tan but you don't look happy." Jamie is a clubland carnivore with a taste for human blood.

bret ellis american psycho: American Psycho (Spanish Edition) Bret Easton Ellis, 2021-03-23 La novela más infame de Bret Easton Ellis: un clásico contemporáneo que se ha convertido en símbolo de una generación. El sofisticado, inteligente y vanidoso Patrick Bateman trabaja en Wall Street, idolatra al joven magnate Donald Trump, cena en los restaurantes de moda de Nueva York y

es capaz de distinguir un traje Armani a cincuenta metros de distancia. También le gusta violar, torturar, asesinar y desmembrar. *American Psycho*, la novela más polémica de Bret Easton Ellis, se ha convertido en el reflejo más descarnado de la sociedad hipermaterialista de finales de los 80 y en una de las obras maestras de finales del siglo xx. Bret Easton Ellis lanza una crítica corrosiva hacia el egoísmo y la depravación del capitalismo exacerbado: un retrato desolador, irónico y rabiosamente vigente de un mundo al borde del colapso en el que todavía vivimos. La novela más infame de Bret Easton Ellis: un clásico contemporáneo que se ha convertido en símbolo de una generación. «*American Psycho* sigue siendo la exégesis literaria más indispensable y salvaje sobre la sociedad que hemos construido.» Irvine Welsh. ENGLISH DESCRIPTION The modern classic, the basis of 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.

bret ellis american psycho: White Bret Easton Ellis, 2020-04-30

bret ellis american psycho: The Spaces of Violence James Giles, 2006-04-09 Probes the interrelationship of violence and space in 10 contemporary American novels. James R. Giles examines 10 novels for the unique ways they explore violence and space as interrelated phenomena. These texts are Russell Banks's *Affliction*, Cormac McCarthy's *Outer Dark* and *Child of God*, Lewis Nordan's *Wolf Whistle*, Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*, Don DeLillo's *End Zone*, Denis Johnson's *Angels*, Sherman Alexie's *Indian Killer*, Robert Stone's *Dog Soldiers*, and Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho*. These stories take place in settings as diverse as small towns, college campuses, suburbs, the brokerage houses and luxury apartments of Wall Street, football stadiums, Appalachian hills, and America's no-man's-land of Greyhound bus stations and highways. Violence, Giles finds, is mythological and ritual in many of these novels, whereas it is treated as systemic and naturalistic in others. Giles locates each of the novels he studies on a continuum from the mythological to the naturalistic and argues that they represent a fourthspace at the margins of physical, social, and psychological space, a territory at the cultural borders of the mainstream. These textual spaces are so saturated with violence that they suggest little or no potential for change and affirmation and are as degraded as the physical, social, and mental spaces out of which they emerge. A concluding chapter extends the focus of *The Spaces of Violence* to texts by Jane Smiley, Toni Morrison, Edwidge Danticat, and Chuck Palahniuk, who treat the destructive effects of violence on family structures.

bret ellis american psycho: Imperial Bedrooms Bret Easton Ellis, 2011-04 De nihilistische rijke jongeren uit de roman 'Less than zero' (1985) hebben zich ontwikkeld tot narcistische delinquenten in de Hollywoodse filmwereld.

bret ellis american psycho: Less Than Zero Bret Easton Ellis, 2010-06-09 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • The timeless classic from the acclaimed author of *American Psycho* about the lost generation of 1980s Los Angeles who experienced sex, drugs, and disaffection at too early an age. • The basis for the cult-classic film Possesses an unnerving air of documentary reality. —The New York Times They live in a world shaped by casual nihilism, passivity, and too much money in a place devoid of feeling or hope. When Clay comes home for Christmas vacation from his Eastern college, he re-enters a landscape of limitless privilege and absolute moral entropy, where everyone drives Porsches, dines at Spago, and snorts mountains of cocaine. He tries to renew feelings for his girlfriend, Blair, and for his best friend from high school, Julian, who is careering into hustling and heroin. Clay's holiday turns into a dizzying spiral of desperation that takes him through the relentless parties in glitzy mansions, seedy bars, and underground rock clubs and also into the seamy world of L.A. after dark.

bret ellis american psycho: Intimate Violence Laura E. Tanner, 1994-11-22 Tanner deals with the central question of all narrative texts: how the reader is manipulated into empathy or distance by the text.... This study... is the sort that needs to be redone in every classroom and by every mature reader.... Tanner offers provocative and useful discussions of rape and torture... -- Choice This thoughtful and disturbing book raises serious questions about 'the consequences... of reading representations of rape and torture.' -- American Literature In this incisive exploration of twentieth-century novels, art, and ads, Laura Tanner explains the mechanisms by which reader and viewer are implicated in violence. Equally effective as a challenge to textual assault is the grace and gentleness of Tanner's own prose. Intimate Violence signals the emergence of an astute and humane critical voice. -- Wendy Steiner Through an examination of such notorious works as *The White Hotel* and *American Psycho*, Laura Tanner leads us in a disturbing exploration of the reader's complicity with fictional depictions of intimate violence.

bret ellis american psycho: Violence and Consumerism in Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* and Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* Michael Frank, 2009-11-10 Examination Thesis from the year 2009 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,5, University of Heidelberg, language: English, abstract: Art has always reflected society. [...] *Fight Club* examines violence and the roots of frustration that are causing people to reach out for such radical solutions. And that's exactly the sort of discussion we should be having about our culture. Because a culture that doesn't examine its violence is a culture in denial, which is much more dangerous. This assessment of *Fight Club* by Edward Norton, who plays the narrator in the novel's movie adaptation, explains the reasoning behind this thesis, which examines the basic principles of today's consumer culture, its connection to aggression and violence, and the way these topics are presented in two contemporary novels: Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* and Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*. In these books, the respective protagonists face similar deadlocks connected to life in the consumerist world of the 1980s and 1990s. Despite, evidently, having everything a person could ask for, both main characters' lives remain unfulfilled, leaving them frustrated and dissatisfied. As it turns out, acts of violence become the only thing that lets them get away from the boredom of their daily routine and gives them a sense of satisfaction.

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