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American Psycho

American Psycho is a movie about a sick man who has an obsession with perfection and killing others. Patrick Bateman, the lead character in ‘American Psycho’, acknowledged in the beginning of the movie that he was different from others because he had no emotions, and as you watch the movie, you’d begin to see just that. Bateman would kill people for no reason and seemed to enjoy the homicides he conducted. Bateman was particular in his murders though, for some of his victims he had a plot set out as to how he would murder them, which included music, a murder weapon, and different locations. He also had many obsessions throughout the movie beginning with having the best business card amongst his other co-workers. Other obsessions included music, eating at and obtaining reservations at some of the best restaurants, blonde woman, killing others, and keeping his body in the best shape possible. After many murders and telling his fiancé he didn’t want to marry her anymore, Bateman finally decided that enough was enough and he was going to confess to his lawyer. American Psycho is a true depiction of a crazy and emotionless person who killed a large number of people, and when he decided to confess his faults no one cared. Based off of Bret Ellis’ novel American Psycho, this movie refers to a psychopathic man who has an immense desire for perfection and multiple obsessions while demeaning women’s value and using them for only sexual purposes.

“I believe in taking care of myself, in a balanced diet, in a rigorous exercise routine. In the morning, if my face is a little puffy, I'll put on an ice pack while doing my stomach crunches. I can do a thousand now” (“American Psycho”). Patrick had a daily morning routine that consisted of keeping his body as fit and perfect as he could. He’d have a lineup of different facial creams for his body which I found slightly unusual because it’s usually the women that have a lineup of creams and facial ointments to put on every morning, but Bateman was just as specific with his creams as a woman would be. So as much as Patrick wanted his women to be perfect in their appearance he expected the same and more out of himself.

Bateman obsessed himself with getting the best reservations at the top restaurants whenever he went out with a lady friend or his co-workers. If he wasn’t trying to get the best reservations they were competing to have the best business cards. The funny part is all of the business cards looked relatively the same, but yet the other co-workers would get jealous if they thought someone else’s business card looked the slightest bit better than theirs. At one point in the movie Bateman was about to strangle one of his blind co-workers in the bathroom after he revealed his new business card. But as he grabbed a hold of his neck and was about to strangle him, the blind man knew it was Bateman and began to confess his love for him. Bateman was turned off by this and immediately left the building.

Bateman also had a thing for women, and as strange as he was some women had a thing for Bateman too. Patrick was usually specific in his choice of women though, there was only thing he wanted most in his women and that was for them to be blonde. One night, after picking up a blonde prostitute off the streets Bateman called for another second hooker too, “I’d like a girl early twenties blonde, who does couples, couples, I really can’t stress blonde enough, blonde” (“American Psycho”). I found this somewhat prejudice, because although many people have their own preferred taste in women or men, I felt like Bateman chose blondes because he felt that they would be more naive than other women. People have referred to blondes as less intelligent to other breeds of women for a while now and I believe Bateman thought he would better be able to take advantage of them because of this.

Throughout the movie, Bateman used strong sarcasm and often talked negatively about women. He and his male co-workers had dinner together on a regular basis to talk about women and other issues that were going on throughout the work place. These men talked about how women are only good for sexuality and nothing more. “If they have a good personality and they’re not great looking, then who fucking cares” (“American Psycho”). This scene sends out a message to women because it shows that although women are supposed to be seen as equals with men, some people still look at them as sexual objects and nothing more. Bateman, in one scene had picked up two blondes to come to his apartment and satisfy him in sexual acts. But as he was performing sexual acts on one of the girls he began to kill her in the process. The other girl tried to escape but he soon caught up with her too and killed her in the stair well with a chain saw. Although this entire movie sparked my emotions, this was one of the scenes that I really felt mainly because of the girls’ facial expression. She had a look of helplessness and she was so scared, especially once she found the other dead bodies in Bateman’s house. As in most horror and or violent movies, you want the innocent person to run the opposite way so that they won’t be in harm’s way, which is exactly how I felt when she tried to escape.

Women have fought hard to have their own rights and to be seen as equals when it comes to men. American Psycho shows that although women may obtain jobs in workplaces with the male body, some men will still only look at them with sexual intents. Certain men will always believe that women are supposed to dress to impress men “Don’t wear that outfit again, wear a dress. A skirt or something…and high heels. I like heels” (“American Psycho”). American Psycho lets their audience know that although our society has come a long way as far as women’s rights are concerned, but some people aren’t willing to change their viewpoints of women. So women must continue to show that they can do just as much a man and that they’re not there just for show.

Oddly enough, you would think that a person with these characteristics and type of personality would be lonesome. He was actually engaged to a very pretty blonde, to whom he never did any harm to. They had an interesting and very open relationship though, because although they were engaged they both were having an affair with other people. Bateman would mention the murders he had to do and how he thirsted to kill someone and his fiancé would ignore all the comments he made as if she didn’t hear him and often only made conversation about their wedding. Near the end of the movie Bateman decided to break it off with his fiancé and attempt to live his life correctly. I could personally never take his fiancé seriously because she seemed comical in everything she said. But she kind of lightened up the movie because although Bateman said he was emotionless, and seemed to be able to kill anyone, he would still put up with her.

After realizing his many mistakes Bateman decided to go ahead and inform his lawyer of the crimes he’s committed. The only problem is that his lawyer refused to believe a word he said and actually found the whole situation to be quite amusing. After repeatedly trying to get his lawyer to believe him Bateman gave in and realized that his confession was good for nothing. And he now wants others to feel the pain that he is now going through because he actually feels guilty about the things he’s done now. Due to Batemans serious and nonchalant character throughout the movie, his apology sparked my emotions because for once he seemed to care about something and was ready for a change.

American Psycho shows Bateman as a raged psychopath who after committing many murders decided that he should become a changed man. But once no one would believe his confession he wanted all others to feel what he felt. This is typical in many other situations likewise, when someone does something wrong, they want others to feel the same pain they are going through so they won’t feel alone. I think this movie touched people because I felt sympathy for not only the people that were killed but also for Patrick Bateman himself, especially once he decided to confess. That was the one time he showed emotions and he actually broke down and started to cry as he voiced his confession over the phone to his lawyer, which made me feel his pain and hope he’d overcome his problem. As the saying goes ‘misery wants company’, and now that Bateman is being tormented by the crimes he’s committed he wants others to feel the same guilt. He ends the movie by saying, ‘There are no more barriers to cross, all I have in common with the uncontrollable and the insane, the vicious and the evil, all the mayhem I have caused and my utter indifference toward it I have now surpassed, my pain is constant and sharp, and I do not hope for a better world for anyone, in fact I want my pain to be inflicted on others. I want no one to escape. But even after admitting this, there is no catharsis, my punishment continues to elude me and I gain no deeper knowledge of myself, no new knowledge can be extracted from my telling. This confession has meant nothing” (“American Psycho”).

Works Cited

Harron, Marie. American Psycho. Lions Gate, 2000.