

American Psycho by Bret Ellis, monotony isn't just the background-it is the psychological architecture of Patrick Bateman's world. The man's existence is regimented, repetitive, and superficial. Over time, the routine becomes a vehicle for desensitization, horror and violence lose their shock value, and the routine becomes indistinguishable from the grotesque. American Psycho uses monotony to unmask the hollowness of 1980s materialism, identity crisis, and numbed morality.

The firmness of this monotony chips away at the boundaries of morality. As the movie progresses, Bateman's acts of violence are described in the same flat, detail oriented style as his grooming routines and dinner reservations. The shocking turns to ordinary through repetition, until scenes of brutality become interchangeable to the endless catalog of brands and menus. Shock is eroded, and desensitization follows. Bateman acknowledges the numbness, remarking that he feels "empty, hardly here at all," as if the routine has hollowed him out.

American Psycho's genius play on monotony makes the piece a critique of not just Bateman's psyche, but of the culture that he is surrounded by. In a society saturated by consumerism and surface appearances, it is suggested that even violence can be absorbed into the endless cycle of routine. Bateman's identity dissolves in this monotony; he, as well as his peers, constantly mistaken for one another, reinforcing the idea that individuality has no place in a culture where sameness rules.

Monotony weaves its way through every level of the narrative; American Psycho does a beautiful job of blurring lines between the ordinary and horror. The result is a portrait of a man and a society so trapped in repetition and surface-level rituals that nothing holds meaning anymore. Routine becomes not stability but suffocation, in the void created, morality collapses. Portrayed through the idea that monotony itself can be its own form of violence, one that wears down empathy until even the most grotesque acts have now become routine. Bateman's world became a mirror held up to our own: the more we allow our lives to be dictated through acts of consumption, status, and empty ritual, the easier it is to become numb to what truly matters in this life. It is suggested that monotony isn't just tedious, but also dangerous. Monotony erodes our capacity to distinguish trivial details and profound human suffering. We are left with an uncomfortable question: in our own routines, how often do we risk mistaking repetition for meaning, as well as comfort for our own moral clarity?