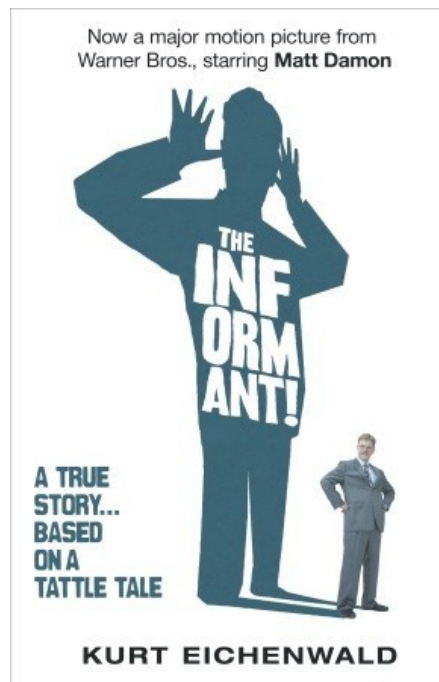




The Informant

Kurt Eichenwald

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The Informant

Kurt Eichenwald

The Informant Kurt Eichenwald

[National Bestseller]

Soon to be a major motion picture from Warner Bros., starring Matt Damon.

In *The Informant*, award-winning investigative reporter and *New York Times* bestselling author Kurt Eichenwald tells the outrageously true story of greed, corruption, and conspiracy that left the FBI and Justice Department counting on the cooperation of one man. Now headed for the silver screen, the film adaptation of *The Informant* is directed by Academy Award-winning director Steven Soderbergh, with Matt Damon set to portray Mark Whitacre, the executive who wore a wire for the FBI as they tried to bring down corporate giant Archer Daniels Midland—but whose dark secrets and hidden agenda threatened to unravel one of the largest price-fixing cases in history.

“Ranks with *A Civil Action* as one of the best nonfiction books of the last decade.”

—*The New York Times Book Review*

“The most riveting tale of recent years... a fast-paced race-car of a book.” —Salon.com

“Reads like an Ed McBain crime novel. I knew how the story ended, but I still couldn’t put the book down.”

—*New York Times*

“Gripping...A remarkable work and a compelling read...The intensity of reportage seems at times almost superhuman.” —*Newsday*

The Informant Details

Date : Published August 11th 2009 by Broadway (first published August 28th 2000)

ISBN : 9780767931250

Author : Kurt Eichenwald

Format : Paperback 629 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Business, Crime, True Crime, History, Mystery

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From Reader Review The Informant for online ebook

Lisa says

I attended a continuing legal education event a week ago, at which the author of this book and one of the FBI agents from the book spoke about the case. I left the event determined to read the book straight away - and in any event, before the movie comes out next year.

I had known of this book for some time, and was generally aware it concerned the ADM antitrust price-fixing trial. But I had thought, wrongly as it turned out, that the book was about the trial. In fact, the trial is relegated to the epilogue.

The book starts with the FBI's investigation of allegations of potential corporate espionage at ADM in Decatur, Illinois. Early in the investigation, one of ADM's executives, Mark Whitacre, admits that the company has been involved in fixing prices with its competitors, and becomes a mole for the FBI.

But that is just the start. As the government builds its case, devastating new facts arise that could compromise the whole case. The government's informant, it seems, is hiding other secrets.

I couldn't put this book down, not even knowing (from the presentation) how it would end. I read all 500+ pages in a matter of days, staying up late. I would definitely recommend it.

Ben says

Loved the movie and the book is fantastic, as well. I loved the way the author used dialogue through transcripts of taped conversations, first hand accounts, and testimony. It reads so smoothly - unlike many "True Stories" - and you feel the deceptions emotionally rather than just tut tutting the bad actors. You as the reader go on the roller coaster with the investigating agents and the prosecutors as they try to build a case around someone that can't be trusted to tell the truth for longer than ten minutes.

My three criticisms of the book are 1) the long section about building of the legal case against Whitacre and ADM dragged for me, 2) Mark Whitacre's mental illness is treated a little bit condescendingly and 3) I wish there had been more discussion about the implications for corporate whistleblowers after Whitacre's case because I don't know why anyone would ever attempt to whistleblow after the way he was treated. I don't want to spoil anything here, but damn.

Overall, this is a long but interesting read and Mark Whitacre is one of the most engrossing people I've ever read in nonfiction. He has all the qualities of a tragic hero AND bumbling villain. Pretty amazing.

Howard says

Once upon a time, I stumbled onto this book on the bargain shelf at Barnes & Noble. Since it cost practically

nothing and looked mildly interesting, I bought it. It went in my TBR bookcase where it languished for years. Oh, occasionally I would pick it up, blow the dust away and read the blurbs and think that it looked mildly interesting, and then place it back on the shelf.

Not long ago, while looking for something to read I picked it up again, blew the dust off and thought, this looks mildly interesting, and decided that I would read it. After all, according to the cover of my paperback copy, it had been made into a major motion picture starring Matt Damon. By the time that I finished the prologue, I was hooked.

It isn't often that a work of nonfiction can be described as a page-turner – but that is a good description of "The Informant." And there are a lot of pages to turn – 500 plus, in fact. Investigative reporter Kurt Eichenwald leaves no stone unturned and no fact unexamined or unreported in his thoroughly researched account of a price fixing conspiracy that occurred in the '90's. Involved were Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), the hugely successful and politically powerful agribusiness corporation, as well as two Japanese and two South Korean corporations.

The prices being fixed included, among others, citric acid and high fructose corn syrup, additives that are found in a countless number of food products. And then there was lysine, an amino acid added to livestock feed, in order to fatten hogs and chickens. The result is that the prices of these additives were artificially propped up and that drove up the expenses of the food producers, which were subsequently passed on to – of course – the consumer.

ADM's advertising slogan was and is "supermarket to the world." But because its competitors wanted to keep prices high and its customers wanted to keep them low, the private and extremely cynical inside slogan among its top executives was "competitors are our friends and customers are our enemies."

I know what I have described thus far doesn't sound like much of a page-turner. But it is. What makes it so is that the FBI was able to persuade one of ADM's top executives to wear a wire in order to tape him and other ADM executives and those of the four Asian corporations, engaging in price fixing. This cooperating witness was at the time (and may still be) the highest-ranking corporate whistleblower in U.S. history. His name is Mark Whitacre.

And what a witness he was! I'm not about to go into details about him or his actions because it is impossible to do so in a brief summary. Also, it would be like spoiling the plot in a whodunit – which is how this book reads.

Eichenwald wrote in an afterword:

"This is a book about the malleable nature of truth. As the story shows, reality can serve as the handmaiden of fiction....Throughout these pages, I've tried to play upon that line between fact and fantasy. While everything described in this book occurred, the story was intentionally structured to lend temporary credence to some of the many lies told in this investigation. Essentially, I was attempting to put readers in the same uncertain position as the investigators, all while dropping hints – admittedly subtle at times – about where reality began."

He accomplished his goal. But beware; this is a complex, convoluted story. There are more characters than in a Russian novel. The reader needs a scorecard to keep up with the players. Fortunately, Eichenwald provides one in the front of the book. Also, complicating the story are the bureaucratic battles fought between FBI investigators and federal prosecutors (to be expected; it happens all the time) as well as turf battles between the U.S. Attorneys offices in Illinois and the Justice Department in Washington, D.C., not to mention internal struggles within the Justice Department. All of this can make it difficult to stay with the story.

My only complaint about the book is that Eichenwald could have streamlined his account somewhat without detracting from the readers understanding of the important facts of the case. But he had done his research – and how – and he was eager to report it – and did he ever.

The book was originally published in 2000. The movie was released in 2009. While the book gives much attention to the FBI agents' investigation, and a great deal of space to the efforts of the prosecutors (whose in-fighting came close to derailing the case), the movie, unable to film the book in its entirety, concentrates on the whistleblower and his amazing antics. Greed and malfeasance that results in international price fixing conspiracies are nothing to laugh about, and yet, when one reads the book, one can't help but laugh at times – even out loud sometime. In fact, the movie was promoted as a comedy –a comedy about price fixing!

The book has been compared to the fiction of Tom Clancy, Scott Turow, Michael Crichton, and, of course, John Grisham. But those writers' imaginations pale in comparison to what Eichenwald recounts in his nonfiction book. One critic wrote, "...with its dizzying array of subplots, twists, and political maneuvers, this book is more like Grisham's entire oeuvre compressed into 600 pages."

Columnist Liz Smith nailed the book precisely when she wrote, "[It] reads like John Grisham on acid...."

The title of the first edition of the book is "The Informant: A True Story." The title of the paperback movie tie-in (published in 2000) that I own is "The Informant! A True Story." I am always wary of book, and especially movie, titles that announce that the story is a "true story." More times than not, it isn't. But this one is.

Exclamation marks in titles are red flags, too. They usually promise more than what they deliver. This one was added because the movie, which heavily concentrates on Mark Whitacre and his role in the proceedings, has to be seen to be believed. But it is true, too. And I have to admit that in this case the exclamation mark is warranted!!

As a friend said about the book, "Truth (even when it's built around lies) is and always will be stranger than fiction"

Debra Jeakins says

THE INFORMANT BY KURT EICHENWALD is about corporate coverup and misdeeds. I picked this book up at a book sale because I live about two hours away from the city of Decatur. You cant travel the highways of Illinois and not see an ADM truck in your rearview mirror. ADM (Archers Daniels Midland) is a midwest company that works with corn, seed, etc products. And every time I spot one of those ADM semi's I think of this book.

ADM, like many other large corporations have not only local political influence, but nation and world wide influence. ADM just happened to get caught in the lies and was exposed for their shenanigans!

THE INFORMANT, a true story, takes the reader and shows not only the shenanigans of ADM but the subsequent outing of the company by one of their own to the FBI.

I dont read much of the nonfiction genre but THE INFORMANT BY KURT EICHENWALD is written so well and so indepth you cant help but think you are reading a fiction story! THE INFORMANT, in my humble opinion would make a terrific movie!

Lobstergirl says

Few people do these massive reconstructions of corporate malfeasance better than Kurt Eichenwald. The ADM price-fixing case (which Eichenwald covered for the *New York Times*) almost recedes to the background as he details the bizarre shenanigans of cooperating witness and lying sociopath Mark Whitacre, president of the Bioproducts Division. (Archer Daniels Midland - "Supermarket to the World..." is a giant agribusiness company that made America obese with high fructose corn syrup and made our diets increasingly more unnatural with new foodlike inventions.) Suicide attempts, diagnoses of mental illness, Nigerian scam letters abound. Yes - several executives making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year fell for *Nigerian scam letters*. (Like they say, salesmen are always a sucker for a sale, and apparently con men are suckers for cons.) Eichenwald includes some covertly taped conversations between ADM executives that aren't related to the price-fixing but pertain to the appearance of various female ADM employees: their attractiveness, weight, speculation on what they like to do in bed, and which of them have "big lips like a black."

"She's just a quiet gal," Whitacre said.

"Sort of a little meek-lookin' gal," Andreas added.

"Yeah," Whitacre said. "But she looks like she's an-"

"Looks like a whore," Andreas interrupted. "Looks like a fuckin' whore."

SPOILER

All three of the men involved in this HR conversation ended up in prison.

Clif Hostetler says

This non-fiction story is more interesting than any fictional crime detective story. I feel compelled to be a bit more enthusiastic than usual about this book to overcome the reaction of potential readers who are not interested in a story about price fixing at Archer Daniels Midland (ADM). That may sound boring. Trust me, it's not!

By the end of the book, you will learn that as of the year 2000 over a billion dollars in fines had been paid worldwide by various food and pharmaceutical companies as a result of the fall-out from this case. Thousands of normally law-abiding people had to be involved over many years for such wide spread price fixing to exist. It took one flawed cooperating witness to expose the crimes to law enforcement. When I use the word "flawed," this one was a doozy! As multiple layers of lies are peeled back in this story the reader can't help but wonder just how many more layers can there be?

The story is told from the point of view of the FBI as they investigate the case. A small but interesting part of the story is the internal friction between the FBI and the Department of Justice (DOJ) prosecutors. In this case the FBI appears to be the good guys and the DOJ are a bunch of bumbling idiots. At one point the DOJ appears to be guilty of trying to obstruct justice in response to political pressure. It's too bad the author wasn't able to learn the behind-the-scenes reasons for their actions. It was probably a good example of the effect of the generous political contributions made by ADM.

A runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize, *The Informant* is a mesmerizing piece of investigative reporting. The foreword to the book says that everything in the book is true including the lies. After finishing the book, I understand the reason for that statement.

The following is from the PageADay Book Lover's Calendar for August 8, 2006:

Kurt Eichenwald, an investigative reporter for The New York Times, interviewed more than 100 people to piece together this incredible true-crime story of a vast international price-fixing scandal. Archer Daniels Midland, a company that supplies oils and flours for grocery products, made corrupt deals with businesses all over the world in a tangled web of white-collar crime. The twists and turns in this shocking-but-true tale make this as compelling as any thriller—and you'll never view items on the grocery store shelves in the same way again.

THE INFORMANT: A TRUE STORY, by Kurt Eichenwald (2000; Broadway, 2001)

Chelsea says

I was amazed by every facet of this book and then appalled to see Archer Daniel Midland ranked in this month's Fortune Magazine as one of the Top Five corporations in the Food Product Division after literally stealing BILLIONS from small farmers around the world for decades. A true American Travesty...
A great read...reads like a well-written mystery or conspiracy novel and yet is a true story.

James says

The author is fairly good at telling an interesting story,
but by the time I got to page 450, I was burned out and went to the last chapter to see how things turned out.

He put in too many descriptions of buildings, etc that really didn't have anything to do with the story.
Also every fart, sneeze, cough and backache by everyone in the book.

Whoever edited the book failed, the story needed to be tighten up.

Only a little about the trial, and because the book was written in 2000, nothing about appeals or actual time served.

So I went to wikipedia,
they have some good pages on the lysine conspiracy and Whitacre.

No page for Michael Andreas tho, he must have killed that.

Wiki was a surprise, Whitacre served quite a long sentence,
while Andreas and Wilson only did 2 years.

AMD got off lightly, and the Dept. of Justice didn't do much about all the other
price fixing AMD did.

AMD's political power paid off.
The fine was only a few months profit, then business as usual.

DOJ was more interested in the \$10 million Whitacre stole than the \$\$\$ Billions that AMD stole.

As an informant, Whitacre really got screwed, after reading this I wouldn't have anything to do with Dept of Justice or the FBI.
DOJ especially looks incompetent, and very, very political.

The DOJ looks like it was bought and paid for by AMD and the Andreas family.
I think there's another story here if someone dug for it.

Turns out the author got in some hot water over ethics a couple of years ago himself;
Ironic?
see wiki for more.

The book doesn't have an index, when it should have one.

Saw the movie last night,
It has many of the punchlines in the book,
but for people who haven't read the book,
it might be hard to understand.
The movie is about a one star.

Ironic I should read the book this year,
so much about sleaze and corruption in Greece.

Then a not too much different story about some Greek-Americans.

Finally, the auditor for AMD was Ernst & Young,
the same auditor for Lehman Brothers.

"Ernst & Young substantially assisted Lehman Brothers,
now bankrupt, to engage in a massive accounting fraud"

E&Y isn't any better than Arthur Anderson,
the auditor for Enron,
Like Anderson they should be put out of business.

Rich Lundeen says

Fascinating true story. On the one hand, I would have liked it more if it were about 1/4 the length. On the other, some of the most interesting details were what made me like it the most. Like... I loved his relationship with the gardener (although totally non essential to the main story).

Kathryn says

This one's tricky. It's a fascinating story with a complex man named Mark Whitacre at the center of the

storm. (I've already added the movie adaptation to my Netflix queue. I'm curious to see what Matt Damon does with this guy.) It covers a broad range of topics including fraud, corporate espionage, relationships between the FBI and cooperating witnesses, relationships between the FBI and other federal agencies, loyalty, political corruption, mental illness...and the list goes on. The fact that it covers so much ground is both its strength and its weakness. The book was an ambitious behemoth. Sometimes it felt overwhelming, and it didn't help that Eichenwald was so freakin' thorough.

To some degree, he needed to provide detail to keep the book interesting (and accurate). He takes it a little far though. At one point, the author describes exactly what food the executives were eating at one of their meetings. He also really liked describing what people were wearing, including the color of their tie. There's a fine line between providing enough detail to set the scene and boring the crap out of a reader who really just wants to know how the story ends. I was having a hard enough time keeping the enormous cast of characters straight without these sorts of extraneous details. (Why do authors think this problem is solved by having a list of characters at the beginning of the book? Do they really think it will be enjoyable for the reader to keep flipping back and forth to check that?) Eichenwald is constantly switching perspectives and I struggled to keep up. I read this book relatively quickly, but that was mostly because I was worried that if I put it down for a few days I'd be hopelessly lost when I picked it back up.

5 stars as a detailed historical record of an important sequence of events. 4 stars as journalism melded with engaging storytelling. But only 3 stars as an enjoyable read for me.

Phrodric says

Bottom line first: Very readable, barely believable. Perhaps too long and certainly a few too many made up conversations. This is high stakes reality TV with unexpected change - ups to keep you turning pages.

As I remember, or choose to remember the timeline: It was made public that one of the planets largest agricultural food and related industries was under criminal investigation on either the same day or the same week as the White Water investigation went public.

The White Water investigation would tie up American fascination, government operations and make the name Lewinsky into the name of an action. The expression: "It depends on what your definition of "is" is; remains an ultimate way to start or finish a conversation on a cynical note. In terms of substance this scandal produced much smoke, some little heat and nothing important.

The Archer Daniels Midlands -ADM- investigation would send several top corporate officials to jail and produce what was then a record criminal penalty. Author Daniel Midlands was leading a plot to control the price of food across the planet. This case is remembered in this book and a briefly popular movie. The Informant!

Most cases of corporate malfeasance and criminal activity hang on technicalities, complex laws and all manner of boring details. They tend to be the stuff of limited interest. The final criminal proceedings against ADM may have been just as technical and dull. The investigation was not.

The Informant is an attempt to capture what reads more like a comedy - psychodrama then anything invoking real people. The story unfolds like a Mad Magazine plot with a group of FBI straight men having to act as jugglers, therapists and mine field guides. One of their biggest problems is: their informant.

From the evidence of this book and vague recollections of at least one 60 Minutes segment, Mr. Mark

Whitacre, the informant in question might be seen in a clown costume, an exceptionally long sleeved white coat, prison garb or superhero tights. His motives and psychology and consequently his behaviors justify a large wardrobe. Mr. Whitacre is the title character of this story, but to spare you too many details...What a piece of work!

One cannot doubt that the FBI agents are the steady rocks of this book. Special Agent Brian Sheppard was one of the first to have deal with this case. A local boy with local ties and no reason to cause harm to a community closely tied to the success and reputation of ADM. He would initially come into the case at the invitation of ADM only to see it became a case against ADM. This kind of turn around is a regular occurrence and the reason why so many reviewers find themselves using the word "fiction" their summaries of this book.

For the true historian or student of corporate crime, it might be worth while to get a more academic version of the story. Other books might better represent the points of view of the various major players. Those books will not make good movies.

Eric says

every time i read a book like this, which doesn't happen often enough, i have a hard time getting into fiction again. if you wrote a novel like this, people would not be able to suspend disbelief, and critics would complain about too many plot implausibilities and an overuse of plot twists. it simply wouldn't work.

if you think you might have trouble getting into a book about lysine price-fixing, you won't. that's just where it starts. it's a fascinating, page-turning look into corporate greed and corruption, but it's also a fascinating look into the lives and minds of the people who pull this stuff off. the central character, marc whitacre, is someone who you'll never forget. i read that the film is being made into a movie, by stephen soderberg, with matt damon in the lead. it's one of those roles that actors would kill for.

Kim Ford says

This is just an incredible story, full of intrigue and deception. It is frightening how corrupt some businessmen are, and how many of them do not get caught. I learned a lot from this book, from how the FBI works, white collar crimes, the justice system, and bipolar disorder. I really enjoyed the movie, but of course the book describes everything in such great detail.

Dkovlak says

Wow! This is a real-life, John Grisham-like novel, but it is a true story. The bottom line is that "crime does not pay." No matter how big you are, crime not only hurts you, but hurts many others. The author does an amazing job of investigating and writing this book. He is very thorough and is able to accurately describe meetings and conversations that happened over a multi-year period. Anyone who is interested in big business should read this book. Even though these events happened many years ago, the lessons learned from this book stand forever.

Tannie Olsen says

This book was a tradeout between me and a friend of mine from work. He got to read "The World is Flat" by Thomas Friedman and I got to read "The Informant". I think he got the better end of the deal.

The Informant is a true story about Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) and their alleged price fixing in a variety of agricultural markets. Mark Whitacre, a top executive of ADM, is the 'informant'. Whitacre assisted the FBI in compiling hundreds of audio and video tapes, documenting ADM's price fixing with companies all over the globe.

The problem came to light when they discovered that Whitacre was not the most stable or truthful individual around. Kurt Eichenwald, a reporter for the New York Times, spent considerable time peeling through the layers of this story. From Dwayne Andreas' sexist attitudes towards women to the Justice Department's ham-handed prosecution, all of the individuals in this book were shown with all their foibles and problems.

But Eichenwald saved his best writing for Mark Whitacre. The first half of the book gives you a good view of the FBI's initial view of Whitacre. A view of competency and an earnest desire to help them with the investigation. Then he begins to show the unraveling of Whitacre from competency to the psychotic, troubled individual that ended up being a liability for the prosecution.

"The Informant" is an enjoyable read. There are slow points. Points where you want to shout at Mark Whitacre "Are you a moron?" I would recommend this for those who want a behind the scenes view of a government investigation gone awry.

LoLo says

The really cool thing about having just finished this book last night is that it mirrors a lot of the current Mueller investigation. Muller's first indictments were unsealed this morning, and I feel like I have a solid understanding of what his cards look like and how he is playing his hand right now thanks to having read this book.

The breaking news this morning of Papadopoulos being a cooperating witness since June is even more synchronous, since this book is about Mark Whitacre as a cooperating witness in the 8 year long price-fixing investigation of Archer Daniels Midland in the 1990s.

This true story is completely insane. Fueled by equal parts corporate malfeasance, an employee's long-winded fraud exploits, and his unstable mental condition, it is a standard Grisham plot if that plot were high on crack for 8 years. The story is revealed through the FBI's investigation, and you get a really great understanding of how an investigation unfolds, how the DOJ fits in, what happens when multiple justice departments want a piece of the prosecution, the indictment process and strategy, and what deals are usually struck after indictment.

There were so many intertwining and competing threads on both ends of the story- multiple FBI and DOJ departments, multiple defendants, and multiple legal teams on all sides. It got really hairy in the middle of it, trying to keep 20 different teams straight in my head. But it's worth it. This was a hell of a ride. Highly recommend if you love John Grisham-type novels. For some reason I devoured those when I was a 13 yr

old girl.

Suzanne says

A can't-put-it-down book about... antitrust? YES.

The ADM price-fixing case in the late 1990s was unprecedented in terms of scope and evidence. The cooperating witness, Mark Whitacre, spent about three taping meeting and phone calls showing ADM agreeing to fix prices with 4 other companies in the global market for lysine. The ADM fine and evidence led to other prosecutions of price-fixing and law enforcement approaches price-fixing investigations and prosecutions in a completely new way.

But the same abilities that made Whitacre such a great informant - his ability to lie and sway others, his compulsive work ethic, his need for control - also created vast problems. In other words, how do you bring down a company engaged in overt crime when your only witness is a bi-polar embezzler? The book builds the case as seen through the eyes of the investigators.

If you're curious but not ready to read the book, listen to the This American Life story from 2002 (available on iTunes) based on the book. It has interviews with the author, one of the investigators, some of the lawyers and Whitacre himself. Or watch the trailer for the new movie based on the book (by the same title), directed by Steven Soderbergh.

Lacey Louwagie says

This isn't the type of book I usually read. I'm not that interested in true crime or in corporate America. So it says something in itself that I still gave this book four stars -- and my main criticisms of it may have to do more with the fact that the genre isn't really my cup-of-tea than real shortcomings of the book.

The hardest things to take about this book are its length and its huge cast of characters. There are times when it just felt long, and it's hard to keep all the ADM employees, lawyers, FBI agents, and other characters straight. (There is a "characters list" at the end of the book that divides them according to their affiliations, but since I listened to the audiobook, I couldn't reference the list and just got to hear it read out at the end of the book, which was less helpful. I was like, "Oh, *that's* who that guy was! Wish I'd realized that when I was reading the book!").

Still, what keeps this book compelling despite its shortcomings is its intensive character study of Mark Whitacre and the FBI agents closest to him. These are fascinating people, and Mark's actions are so bold/crazy/out of left field that it made my jaw drop. It's easy to just refer to him as crazy, but I feel bad actually doing so, since clearly he did have some mental illness issues going on.

I thought that what might make this book all worth it in the end was ADM's top execs getting properly punished for the corporate fraud and greed that was their daily existence. It was sickening how they felt totally untouchable in terms of what they were allowed to do and what they thought they could get away with. And while they didn't exactly "get away with" it, it was a let down to know that they only served a couple years for cheating customers around the world, whereas Mark Whitacre served almost ten years for the money he stole from one company.

Kurt Eichenwald is a good writer and a fantastic journalist, and he even inserts himself at the end of the book, explaining how he came to cross paths with Mark Whitacre and begin this project, which was a nice way to bring things full circle.

I rewatched the movie (which is what piqued my interest in the book initially) after "reading it," and the movie actually does a pretty good job of staying true to the spirit of the story while cutting about 24 hours of material down to two.

Jeff says

I recommend reading this before learning more about ADM or Mark Whitacre. Eichenwald makes his readers experience the confusion, complexity, and excitement that surrounded the investigation of ADM. Because some sections of the book are painstakingly detailed and lengthy, I found myself at times hoping for the story to wrap up a little faster. Despite this, the book is really well researched and written in a way that keeps the reader on edge. Why would someone making several hundred thousand dollars a year as an executive of a company work to expose illegal behavior in that same company? I'm not sure anyone will ever fully understand the mindset of Mark Whitacre. Was he really trying to do the right thing?

Ryan Quillian says

I'm still reading, but this is definitely the most sexy an author could make a story about price fixing.
