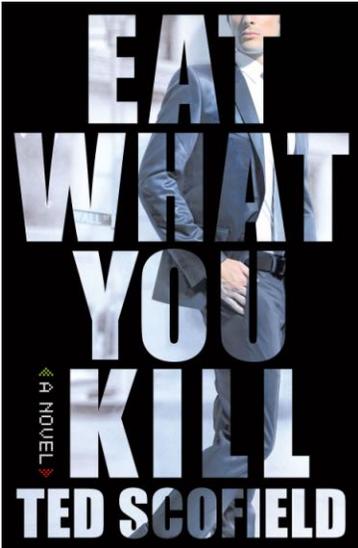


Eat What You Kill

by Ted Scofield

Media Segment Ideas & Background Information

NOVEL SUMMARY



In *Eat What You Kill* by Ted Scofield, Evan Stoess is a struggling young Wall Street analyst obsessed with fortune and fame. A trailer park kid who attended an exclusive prep school through a lucky twist of fate, Evan's unusual past leaves him an alien in both worlds, an outsider who desperately wants to belong. When a small stock he discovers becomes an overnight sensation, he is poised to make millions and land the girl of his dreams, but disaster strikes and he loses everything.

Two years later a mysterious firm offers Evan a chance for redemption, and he jumps at the opportunity. His new job is to short stocks -- to bet against the market. But when the stock goes up and he finds himself on the brink of ruin once again, another option presents itself: murder. At a moral crossroads, Evan must ask himself -- how far will a man go for money and revenge?

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "EAT WHAT YOU KILL"?

"Eat what you kill" is a common compensation scheme both on Wall Street and in large law firms. Basically, it means that employees are paid based on what they produce – very little or no compensation is guaranteed. If one generates a lot of business for the firm, whether it be billable hours or commissions or consulting fees, she is paid handsomely for it. "The eat-what-you-kill system solely rewards individual efforts, with no recognition for anything beyond personal production." As a result, with regard to an employee's income, "there can be no blaming anyone else."¹

- From the Chicago Tribune²: "In the securities trading business, the 'eat what you kill' mentality rules, with a few star performers becoming millionaires while many others fail." (November 2013)
- From the Daily Report³: "Dupont and other corporate law departments may not pay as much as private firms, he said, but they offer work-life balance instead of an 'eat what you kill' mentality...." (January 2014)

BACKGROUND STORY

Sometime around my eighteenth birthday, I shorted a stock for the first time. I bet the stock's price would *fall*. I think I had about two grand riding on it, and I was nervous. What would I be

¹ <http://www.managingpartnerforum.org/tasks/sites/mpf/assets/image/MPF%20-%20Featured%20Articles%20-%20LF%20Compensation%20Systems%20-%20202-25-13.pdf>

² <http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-tw-spot-trading-20131112.0.3992022.story>

³ <http://www.dailyreportonline.com/id=1202640380402?slreturn=20140103145613>

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willing to do to *make* the stock go down if it insisted on going up? What if my entire net worth or reputation were riding on the bet?

At that moment, the seed was planted.

Over the next fifteen years I went to college, worked in politics, went to both business and law school, and toiled “in the trenches” as a Wall Street lawyer.

And the story grew, around a character I feared I knew too well.

What was I willing to give up for fortune and fame? I could no longer *not* write the story in my head, and at 3am on March 20, 2007, I wrote the first two sentences: *Evan Stoess could choke back the bile that soured his throat. His soul was a different story.*

I didn’t realize until years later, after I had finished the novel, that the protagonist, Evan, and I share initials (my real name is Edward).

WHY IS *EAT WHAT YOU KILL* TOPICAL?

We are in an era of unprecedented materialism, greed, and celebrity worship. Every day we read about income inequality, hedge fund excesses, ponzi schemes, insider trading scandals and people willing to do *anything* for fame and fortune (e.g., humiliate themselves on reality TV programs).

“Would you sell your soul for fame, fortune and success?” Many Americans would say “Yes.” Some recent headlines:

- *Ex-Bristol Executive Pleads Guilty to Insider Trading*
- *Gordon Gekko Lives: New Evidence That Greed Is Rampant on Wall Street*
- *Fund Manager Settles Case in Dell Insider Trading Ring*
- *Feds probing insider trading by Goldman exec*
- *Hedge Fund Manager Sentenced To 11 Years In Prison For Insider Trading*
- *Wall Street traders don't mind committing the crime - it's doing the time that gives them the willies.*

Surveys confirm that Americans view greed and materialism as an “urgent moral problem”:

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MOST URGENT MORAL PROBLEM IN AMERICAN CULTURE?				
	All voters	Liberals	Moderates	Conservatives
Greed/materialism	32.6%	34.9%	40.8%	24.3%
Poverty/economic justice	30.6%	61.4%	37.6%	6.0%
Abortion	15.7%	0.3%	5.8%	30.0%
Same-Sex Marriage	12.3%	1.5%	6.7%	26.5%
None/No response	8.9%	1.9%	9.1%	13.3%

Zogby International, N=10,660

In another poll, 93% of teenage girls listed *shopping* as their favorite activity, with only 5% saying “helping others.” In 1967, two-thirds of American college students found “developing a meaningful philosophy of life” to be “very important,” while one-third indicated “making a lot of money.” Those figures have now reversed.⁴

The number of freshmen saying the key reason for their decision to attend college was “to make more money” has reached a new high of 71%. Business continues to be the preferred career, as a record 25% of the students name it as their first choice.⁵

Four in five working Americans say selfishness and the condition of the poor are serious national problems. 75% say there is ‘too much emphasis on money’ in the US. But ask them what they consider important in life, and the same number say having a beautiful home, a new car and other nice things.

Brought down to a personal level, however, 80% said having a beautiful home, a new car and other nice things was absolutely essential, very important or fairly important to them. Three out of four respondents said wearing nice clothes was important. ... The No. 1 reason people chose their present line of work: the money.”⁶

“Nine in ten agreed with the statement that ‘children nowadays are more materialistic than past generations’.”⁷

What are you willing to do for \$10,000,000? Well, 25% would abandon their entire family. 23% would become prostitutes for a week. 16% would leave their spouses. 7% would murder a stranger.⁸

SEGMENT IDEAS

Income Inequality / Greed / Materialism

In *Eat What You Kill*, we meet Evan Stoess, a young man who is acutely aware of income inequality. He attended an exclusive prep school on scholarship. He was surrounded by wealth, only to go home to abject poverty. Much of Evan’s experience is based on the author’s personal experience during his twelve years at a private day school.

- Income inequality is neither a new concept nor a new concern. Almost two thousand years ago, Plutarch said, “An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and the most fatal ailment of all republics.”
- NY Times op/ed piece on money addiction: “For the Love of Money” (1/19/14)
- The Wolf of Wall Street – “The greed. That always empty feeling. The Big Problem.” (New York Magazine, December 2013)

⁴ From the book *Affluenza: the all-consuming epidemic* by De Graaf

⁵ <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=940DE0DF143CF937A25752C0A96E948260>

⁶ http://articles.latimes.com/1994-09-24/local/me-42320_1_study-findings

⁷ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/25_02_08_childhood.pdf

⁸ James Patterson and Peter Kim, *The Day America Told the Truth*, 1991

- Is greed good? Boris Johnson, mayor of London, recently invoked the spirit of Gordon Gekko when he said that greed could be “a valuable spur to economic activity.”
 - “I don't believe that economic equality is possible; indeed some measure of inequality is essential for the spirit of envy and keeping up with the Joneses that is, like greed, a valuable spur to economic activity.”
- Ponzi schemes, suddenly a spate of them. Headlines from January 21 & 22:
 - New York real estate lawyer charged with swindling \$4 million from would-be investors in Ponzi scheme (New York Daily News)
 - Naval Academy alum bilked \$1 million from friends, ex-classmates
 - West Roxbury family pleads guilty to multimillion-dollar Ponzi scheme
 - Las Vegas man sentenced to 10 years in \$1.3 million Ponzi scheme
 - Man Arrested in Europe for Michigan Ponzi Scheme
- Brooklyn’s envious, shoplifting mom

Women & High-Paying Career Importance

In a reversal of traditional gender roles, young women now surpass young men in the importance they place on having a high-paying career or profession, according to survey findings from the Pew Research Center. Two-thirds (66%) of young women ages 18 to 34 rate career high on their list of life priorities, compared with 59% of young men. In 1997, 56% of young women and 58% of young men felt the same way.⁹

A Gallup survey found similar results: 69% of men ages 18-49 said advancing in one’s career is extremely or very important, compared with 65% of women in the same age range.¹⁰

Violent Video Games

In *EAT WHAT YOU KILL*, the protagonist stages a bloody murder using a violent video game as an alibi.

- From February 7, 2014: Violent video games leave teenagers 'morally immature', claims study
- “Exposure to violence makes it harder for teens to tell right from wrong”

Novels are Good for the Brain & Dominate Lists of Bestsellers

- Reading a novel triggers positive, lasting changes in the brain
 - <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/270640.php>
- Fiction dominated the list of best-selling books of 2013
 - <http://www.usatoday.com/story/life/books/2014/01/15/usa-today-best-selling-books-of-2013/4451561/>

Anti-heroes, Unlikable Protagonists

“Surprisingly, Stoess is a sympathetic character despite his murderous ways, which makes this debut novel an emotional rollercoaster of a read.” -- Booklist’s review of *Eat What You Kill*

⁹ <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/04/19/a-gender-reversal-on-career-aspirations/>

¹⁰ <http://www.gallup.com/poll/164048/young-men-women-value-career-similarly-unlike-elders.aspx>

- The NY Times: “Are We Too Concerned That Characters Be ‘Likable’?”
- BuzzFeed: “Not Here to Make Friends: On the importance of unlikeable female protagonists”

AUTHOR BIO

Ted Scofield is an author, securities attorney, and entrepreneur.

Ted serves as the General Counsel of Icebreaker Entertainment, LLC, a New York-based company that creates and markets consumer products under multiple brands, with products in stores across the US including Target, Walmart, Kohl’s, Dollar General, Barnes & Noble and more. Founded by Christi Scofield, the company is expanding to Europe in 2014.

In his role as a securities/corporate attorney, Ted advises entrepreneurs, emerging companies, and established corporations on the private and public sales of both equity and debt.

After graduating from Vanderbilt University, Ted started a political consulting firm that offered such services as campaign management, media creation and purchasing, and general strategy. During this time period, he wrote essay-length features for a weekly newspaper in Louisville, Kentucky, where Ted was born and raised.

In 1994 Ted returned to Vanderbilt University, where he earned a JD and MBA in finance. In New York, he worked for Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP before launching his own private practice and joining his current firm, Furnari Scher LLP.

Ted has extensive media experience including appearances as a political commentator on WPIX Channel 11 in New York City. He has been quoted in *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *BusinessWeek* and dozens of other regional and national publications.

Ted lives in Manhattan with his wife, Christi. They were married in November of 2007 on the island of Anguilla.

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