



Arrogance and Accords: The Inside Story of the Honda Scandal

By Steve Lynch

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Arrogance and Accords: The Inside Story of the Honda Scandal is the tale of the largest commercial corruption case in U.S. history. Between 1994 and 1997, eighteen former executives of American Honda Motor Company, along with four other people, were convicted on federal fraud and racketeering charges. The big secret at Honda was out: Over a 15-year period, the gang of greedy Honda officials had received over \$50 million in cash and gifts from automobile dealers eager to obtain additional hot-selling Honda cars and franchises. The ill-gotten booty included briefcases stuffed with up to \$750,000 in cash, palatial homes, luxury German automobiles, secret ownerships in dealerships and other businesses, and Hong Kong shopping sprees.

When the automobile market softened in the early 1990s, the high-rolling officials, led by Honda's charismatic national sales manager, switched to embezzling money from the corporation. Honda belatedly fired the executives in 1992 and tried to keep the scandal under wraps - until an ambitious small-town Assistant U. S. Attorney decided to investigate. Eighteen never-before arrested Honda executives were subsequently convicted. Most went to prison.

The final event of the scandal occurred in August 1997 when the nation's largest automobile dealer, Rick Hendrick, pleaded guilty to mail fraud in a federal court in North Carolina.

Arrogance and Accords is both a true-crime story and a look inside one of the world's most respected companies. It details the key characters and their shady deals, along with the internal and FBI investigations, and reveals the corporate culture that allowed the pandemic payola to flourish for so long. The author examines how the corruption adversely affected Honda's sales efforts, from how it marketed automobiles to the establishment of the Acura luxury car division.

The book also provides a compelling look inside the much-maligned American automobile business.

Written by Steve Lynch, a former top Honda marketing executive, Arrogance and Accords is an insightful, often hilarious tale of greed, ignored whistle-

blowers, paranoid Japanese managers, and the raucous 1995 federal trial of two of the Honda officials who decided to fight the charges.

Told as only an insider could, *Arrogance and Accords* is written with authority and style by someone who was in the thick of the action.

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Editorial Review

Review

For all of the things right about Honda in the 1970s and 80s, there was something terribly wrong inside the house of Honda. Evidence suggests that high-ranking U.S. executives were shaking down their own dealers for cash or, in some cases, were forcing dealers to make the executives literal partners in their franchises. In return, dealers were allotted more cars - there were never enough to go around - or better yet, additional dealerships. Former Honda marketing executive Steve Lynch covers it all, from a unique insider's perspective, in *Arrogance and Accords: The Inside Story of the Honda Scandal*. Commendably, Lynch handles the story with balance, never tearing into personalities for their transgressions, but simply reporting the story.

Arrogance and Accords is often fascinating, always compelling. It should be required reading in business-ethics courses. Maybe some of Honda's former executives could teach the classes as part of their work-release program. -- *Ed Wallace - Car and Driver magazine, February 1998*

Steve Lynch, a former Honda marketing exec and author of *Arrogance and Accords: The Inside Story of the Honda Scandal*, describes a scene in this book in such extraordinary detail that it stays with the reader throughout the 300-plus pages that chronicles the largest commercial corruption case in U.S.

Lynch tells the sordid tale with a perspective and authority that only he can provide - the Santa Paula dealership, for example. Lynch was there, and he confesses that "he was no choir boy." -- *Michele Krebs - Autoweek magazine, February 16, 1998*

About the Author

Steve Lynch grew up in the shadow of the Studebaker automobile factory in South Bend, Indiana, and attended Indiana University. Lynch spent 13 years in the world of Honda, rising from a Honda dealership showroom floor to the executive offices of American Honda Motor Company, where he was in charge of regional marketing. Lynch also worked for Honda's advertising agency. He lives in Dallas, Texas.

Users Review

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Richard Hennessy:

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