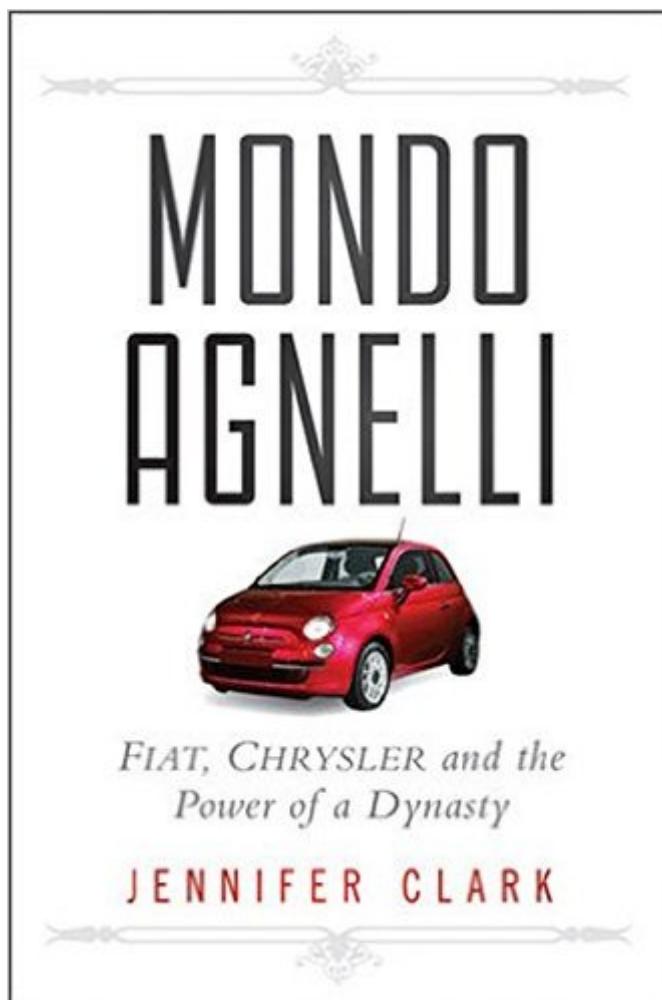


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Mondo Agnelli: Fiat, Chrysler, And The Power Of A Dynasty



Synopsis

The fascinating story of a century-old automobile dynasty Fiat is one of the world's largest automakers, but when it made headlines by grabbing control of a bankrupt Chrysler in 2009 it was unknown in the U.S. Fiat's against-all-odds swoop on Chrysler---masterminded by Sergio Marchionne, the Houdini-like manager who saved Fiat from its own near-collapse in 2005 --- has made the automaker one of the most unlikely winners of the financial crisis. *Mondo Agnelli* is a new book that looks at the chain of unpredictable events triggered by the death of Gianni Agnelli in 2003. Gianni, the charismatic, silver-haired power broker and style icon, was the patriarch who had lead the company founded by his grandfather in 1899. But Gianni's own son had committed suicide. Without a mature heir, the dynasty and Fiat were rudderless. Backed by Gianni's closest advisors, his serious, shy, and determined grandson John plucked Marchionne from obscurity. Together, they saved the family company and, inadvertently, positioned Fiat as a global trailblazer when the global storm hit. A classic story of ingenuity and hard work, the book portrays a business dynasty that triumphed over adversity and family tragedy because of its own smarts, sweat, and ability to bend the rules. As an engaging tale for those interested in the stories behind the economic crash, the book contains never-before reported material about how Fiat succeeded in making Chrysler profitable where both Daimler AG and Cerberus, its previous owners, had failed. A story for a wide audience, from car buffs, business readers, lovers of Italy, and anyone fascinated by the lifestyle of Europe's most glamorous industrial dynasty, this book tells the tale of how Fiat achieved the seemingly impossible -- turning around an American automotive icon everyone else had given up for dead.

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Customer Reviews

This is a fascinating book, and a very complex one. On one hand it is the story of two car companies on the brink of failure and how, against all odds, they survived and thrived. But it is also the story of the Agnelli family's vivid cast of characters. Ms. Clark describes the members of the family in compelling terms - you can almost see them in their privileged life and the trials and tribulations that they suffered. Her depiction of some of the key events, weddings, suicides, and family gatherings are so clear that the reader feels present. Further, her description of the economics of the story is clear enough for those of us who are not economists to understand yet conveys the complexities of the situation. In short, a must read. You will learn a lot and also have a lot of fun. Happy reading!

Having read a half dozen books on the Big Three and a few other books on foreign cars, I was expecting a lot of detail, like Bob Lutz writes in his books, about the vehicles, management style, and regulators or other obstacles in the path of the Fiat/Chrysler event. What I was not expecting was a genealogy soap opera. The writer made reference to the Kennedy family of America and its tragedies in a comparison with the long history of the Agnelli family and Fiat. The single value of the first 13 chapters of the book was learning what the letters F-I-A-T meant. The final two chapters contained the material constituting the reason I bought the book. If you want to read a good car book, don't waste your money and time on this one.

This book is an interesting alternate perspective on the Chrysler-Fiat merger in 2009. Instead of the usual domestic auto industry view it comes at the process from the FIAT side. The author clearly knows the FIAT side while the Chrysler side is easy to sketch for American readers. The section of book containing the history of FIAT may be of limited interest to American readers but the alternative way of providing a background to the merger would be yet another rehashing of Chryslers problems for the last 20 years. The author emphasizes that all parties to the negotiation wanted it to work. Chrysler management, FIAT management, the UAW, Chrysler bond holders, and the Obama administration were all highly motivated. In some ways this is the Sergio Marchionne story with the Agnelli family playing backup but it is also the story of one segment of the ongoing transformation world auto industry.

Mondo Agnelli, the book by Jennifer Clark, reads like a historical fiction/industrial espionage. J Clark, through her in-depth presentation of the Agnelli family, draws the reader into the power of the

family and its effects on war, politics and the creation of the middle class as it is known in Italy today. Giani Agnelli's playboy life style, the relationship with other great families like the Kennedy's and their own personal tragedies carry the reader through the book. Before long you are reading about complicated international banking as a gripping drama. Clark brings FIAT and the Agnelli family to the current day. The Chrysler take-over and the intense international meetings give greater weight and clarity to all that has gone on in the past three years in the U.S. auto industry. This book marries politics, history, and international banking with the stories of the rich and famous in one good read. I highly recommend this book. There are many typos in this book which can be distracting when you read it. My advice is to read over them and hopefully the editors will get it right in the next printing.

This is a detailed, fascinating, and well written account of the Agnelli family and others who built Fiat and who continue to run the amazing company. The early history was extremely interesting as were the final chapters on the Fiat / Chrysler blend. If you're interested in the history of Fiat, or the history of automobiles and the people that run the companies that design and build them, then this is a great read. Highly recommended.

Well, reviewing this book is hard. The guy who put a car on the cover basically put the author in a spot. You see, the book is not about cars, not at all. The woman who wrote the book spends an entire chapter describing a wedding, right down to the bride's hairdo and the how the caterer coped with rain. But cars? No. All I learned about Fiats from this book is that Italian cars do not have cup holders. Once I got over that disappointment, the book is pretty well written and tries mightily to explain the ins and outs of the Agnelli clan and their century old ownership of Fiat. The first 2/3 of the book is about that, then the last 1/3 is about Fiat's take over and turn-around of Chrysler. If you like stories of family in-fighting, corporate takeovers, crazy complex-barely legal stock swaps, then this book is for you. She does write well and even I made it through the entire book, all the while hoping in vain for something about Fiat CARS.

I was expected much better. I bought the book rather than the ebook because I thought it may be something worth keeping and ordered the print version. The book jumped back and forth in time quite a bit in the beginning which drove me crazy. It discussed some infighting in the Agnelli family but did little in the way it approached the contributions the various members made to the auto business If any. It rather glossed over and short changed the union of Chrysler to FIAT and did

not really get into the hard negotiations that were needed for the joining and saving of both companies. Overall given the size of the book the same amount of good info could have been condensed down to a large newspaper or magazine article. The book was a disappointment to me.

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