

## *Car Safety Wars*

*One Hundred Years of Technology, Politics, and Death*

By Michael R. Lemov



*“A must-read for all who want to understand the history of motor vehicle safety and the complex roles played by legislators, regulators, safety advocates, and the automobile industry.”* —**MICHAEL STANTON**, former Chief Executive Officer, Global Automakers, Washington, DC

*“In Car Safety Wars, Michael R. Lemov has done a masterful job of documenting the long and complicated evolution of a critically important public-health effort—the century-long campaign to make motor vehicles safer. As a first-hand participant in and observer of that effort, he brings special insights into its successes and failures. Car Safety Wars is essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the history of auto safety in this country.”* —**BEN KELLEY**, board member, Center for Auto Safety; former senior vice president, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

*“Lemov’s Car Safety Wars is an insider’s view of how people have influenced power and policies that make us all safer. Car Safety Wars empowers people to better protect themselves and their loved ones from crash deaths and serious injuries—and to help build a safer America.”* —**LOUIS V. LOMBARDO**, former research scientist, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; founder of [careforcrashvictims.com](http://careforcrashvictims.com)

*“For a lot of reasons Lemov is the right person to write about the tumultuous success story of car safety—counsel to the House committee that crafted the legislation, gifted writer, and impressive historian. Record recalls serve as a reminder that auto safety is a continual challenge, and this notable work importantly calls that to attention.”* —**PETER HARKNESS**, founding publisher, *Governing Magazine*; former editor, *Congressional Quarterly*

*Car Safety Wars* is the gripping history of the hundred-year struggle to improve the safety of American automobiles and save lives. Described as the “equivalent of war” by the Supreme Court, the long battle for automobile safety was won by consumers and safety advocates after decades of defeat. The major victory was the enactment in 1966 of a groundbreaking federal safety law, which has cut highway death and injury rates by over 70 percent in the years since its enactment. But the safety wars have not ended. General Motors and Toyota, among other companies, have for years failed to report defective vehicles, leading to countless injuries and fatalities. These events warn that safety laws and agencies created with good intentions can be corrupted and strangled over time. This book suggests ways to avoid this result, but shows that safer cars and highways are a hard road to travel. We are only part of the way home.

### About the Author

**Michael R. Lemov** served as general counsel of the National Commission on Product Safety; Chief Counsel of the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee of the House of Representatives, Commerce Committee and as a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice.

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