

The VOTE Textbook

Student Notes

Chapter 9: Product Safety

Discussion Story: Chevy Corvair

Product Safety is the potential of goods and services to cause harm to consumers

The Golden Moment

Shared Problem: Products can cause harm

Shared Goal: The protection that people want

Understanding the Issue of Product Safety

Product Safety Standards: Criteria that firms must meet before they can offer their products on the market

Three Ways to Ensure Product Safety

1. Consumers
Consumer sovereignty, boycotts, lawsuits
2. Firms
Voluntary recalls, trade association agreements
3. Government
Regulations and agencies

Government Agencies Focused on Product Safety

- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Many others

Voices on Product Safety

Liberal

Response to discussion story: Stronger government oversight would have saved lives by ensuring that GM installed the anti-sway bar as standard equipment.

Voice: Pages 262-265

Summary: Page 266

Talking Points: Page 267

Radical

Response to discussion story: GM was pressured to cheap out and make an extra penny of profit by not installing the anti-sway bar. People died because of capitalism.

Voice: Pages 268-271

Summary: Page 272

Talking Points: Page 273

Conservative

Response to discussion story: GM respected customers by giving them the choice. They could read the reviews and decide for themselves whether to buy the anti-sway bar.

Voice: Pages 274-277

Summary: Page 278

Talking Points: Page 279

Shared Outcome: The protection that people want.

Activity: Role-Play, "Breakfast with the Family," Page 281