

SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITORS OF MCN

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Re: Fatal Design—Pro

First a little background on myself, so that you'll better understand as to where I'm coming from. I am a retired law enforcement officer, having spent 30 years so employed. I was an Emergency Medical Technician for about 28 years. I have been a North Western University-trained, Motor Vehicle Accident Investigator for 27 years. I've been a reader of your publication for about 26 years, and a motorcyclist for about 25 years, and finally I have been a Motorcycle Safety Foundation Instructor/Rider Coach for about the last 11 years.

During the above time and involvement, I have been to more than a few seminars, classes, refresher programs, updates and recertifications, etc. And yet, I don't ever recall seeing any one article, or the publication of any one single piece of research, that was more meaningful to those disciplines or more insightful than that of "Fatal Design—Why Motorcycle Fatalities Have Doubled," by Wendy Moon.

To say that I was impressed would indeed be an understatement. Not that what is being reported is in itself so earth shaking, but rather it is in its simplicity and directness and candor that it is so powerful.

What will ultimately be done with this research, what any of the above disciplines will do to further the research is an unanswered question? I would, however, urge you to use whatever resources are available to you to see to it that as many of them are made aware of its existence as possible.

Dale Doman
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Excellent article on motorcycles and LTVs. As a driver/rider of both, I really appreciated it. While forcing a redesign of LTV front ends may be one approach, I question its practicality, and prefer to emphasize accident avoidance.

I'd suggest the point about fatalities from LTV/motorcycle accidents would be

clearer if readers understood that in accidents with passenger cars, 4.0% of riders died, while 5.5% of riders in accidents with LTVs died. Five and a half percent may not seem like much, but it is 1.38 times as high as 4.0%; in other words, you have almost one and a half times as much probability of dying if you collide with an LTV than with a car (but not quite the 2.4 probability stated).

When test driving SUVs prior to purchasing mine, I was impressed, or rather distressed, to find that the center pillar in the rear of the Chevrolet Tahoe and Suburban with twin rear side-opening doors (as opposed to lift-gate) is much wider than it appears to be from the outside, and in my test drive, concealed a large, 1970's "boat" that was driving behind me. Riders should be aware that such pillars may block a driver's view of motorcycles much further than your article suggests. Another factor is the popularity of tinted rear windows, which serve their purpose, but also obscure "smaller" objects such as motorcycles, especially if riding without lit headlights.

Having moved from the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area to Southwestern Colorado a year ago, I find my student riders face a different set of challenges—including the preponderance of light trucks, SUVs, trailers and motorhomes on our roads. And yes, I see more deer here in a week than I saw in Virginia or Maryland in a year.

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