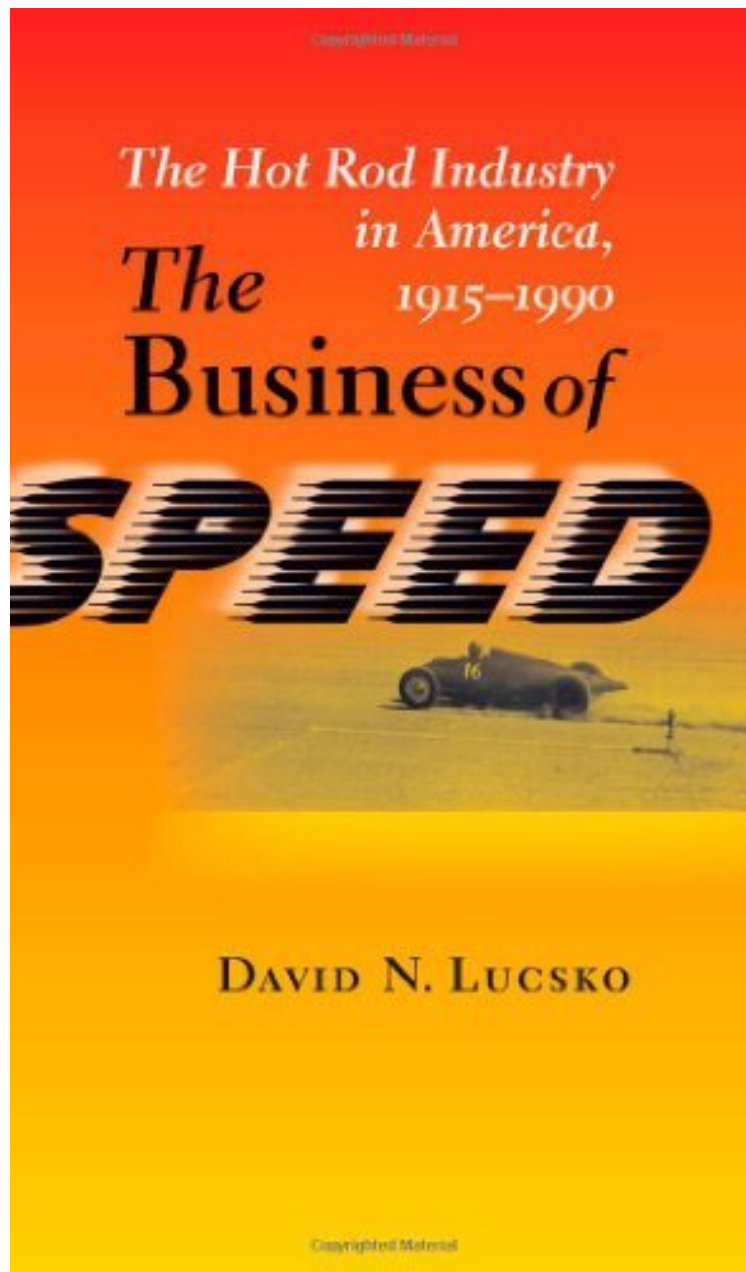


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## The Business of Speed: The Hot Rod Industry in America, 1915-1990 (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology)

*David N. Lucsko*

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Business of Speed: The Hot Rod Industry in America, 1915-1990* (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Brilliant History of a Fascinating Industry By John McCarriker When an academician writes about a pop culture topic like hot rods the result is usually very good or very bad. In this case the result is excellent. The author has clearly done his homework and provides an interesting story backed with extensive references. The author traces the relationships among all the major players including the auto manufacturers, speed equipment manufacturers, customers, Hot Rod magazine, NHRA, SEMA, and EPA. His history of SEMA, Speed(Specialty) Equipment Manufacturers Association, provides a valuable framework for understanding the evolution of the industry in the 1960's and 70's. The book is divided into ten logical chapters that are primarily chronological but with some overlap. The development of the speed equipment industry is analyzed as the rational evolution of a group of enthusiasts who grew into sophisticated business competitors operating in an ever-changing social and technological environment.

Since the mass production of Henry Ford's Model T, car enthusiasts have been redesigning, rebuilding, and reengineering their vehicles for increased speed and technical efficiency. They purchase aftermarket parts, reconstruct engines, and enhance body designs, all in an effort to personalize and improve their vehicles. Why do these car enthusiasts modify their cars and where do they get their aftermarket parts? Here, David N. Lucsko provides the first scholarly history of America's hot rod business. Lucsko examines the evolution of performance tuning through the lens of the \$34-billion speed equipment industry that supports it. As early as 1910, dozens of small shops across the United States designed, manufactured, and sold add-on parts to consumers eager to employ new technologies as they tinkered with their cars. Operating for much of the twentieth century in the shadow of the Big Three automobile manufacturers—General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler—these businesses grew at an impressive rate, supplying young and old hot rodders with thousands of performance-boosting gadgets. Lucsko offers a rich and heretofore untold account of the culture and technology of the high-performance automotive aftermarket in the United States, offering a fresh perspective on the history of the automobile in America.