



# **I Fought the Law: Photographs by Olivia Locher of the Strangest Laws from Each of the 50 States**

*Olivia Locher (Contributor) , Kenneth Goldsmith (Foreword) , Eric C Shiner (Contributor)*

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Strange, outdated laws from each of the 50 U.S. states—some overturned, some still on the books, and some merely the stuff of legends—are depicted with sly wit by Olivia Locher. Incisive, ironic, and gorgeous, these images will appeal to art buffs and trivia fans alike. A foreword from American poet Kenneth Goldsmith and an interview with the artist by Eric Shiner, former director of the Andy Warhol Museum, contextualize rising-star Locher's photography. From serving wine in teacups in Kansas to licking a toad in Kentucky or perming a child's hair in Nebraska, breaking the law has never looked so good.

## **I Fought the Law: Photographs by Olivia Locher of the Strangest Laws from Each of the 50 States Details**

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# **From Reader Review I Fought the Law: Photographs by Olivia Locher of the Strangest Laws from Each of the 50 States for online ebook**

**R.K. Cowles says**

3 3/4 stars

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**Mary says**

An interestingly artistic examination of laws in each of the 50 US states.

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**Peter Geyer says**

This is a book you look at rather than read, with photos and captions regarding a strange law in each of the 50 American States. The front cover has an ice-cream cone in someone's back pocket, illegal apparently in Alabama and you can't wear shoes in bed in Oregon or put an American flag on a bar of soap in Nevada. I could go on, although not all are as amusing to me as these, and some may actually have a point, like not being able to deface rocks in New Mexico.

For me, the point of having a book like this, or showing it to others, is to stimulate thought about what being law-abiding can mean as well as how far a person can adjust to the prevailing society, even if the laws may have had a particular use in the past.

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**Sarah says**

While the pictures are illustrative of the alleged laws and are interesting to look at (though nothing really special), the fact that the photographer states at the beginning that not all of these are currently or were ever laws is misleading and just plain lazy. Some of the laws she chose to depict as strange make absolute sense: The law illustrated for South Carolina, outlawing fishing with dynamite (also called blast fishing) is common globally (it's illegal in EVERY state in the US, and is legal only in about 40 countries worldwide). Blast fishing is incredibly destructive to not just the animals, but also the habitat and people in the area of the blasting. Clearly, what Locher thinks of as "strange" does not have bearing on reality, and her ignorance shows in her choice to use rumors/urban legends (without notations, sources or, you know, doing the work), as well as her selections. This book is a total fail, and not worth picking up.

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**April says**

This, um, project could have been so much more.

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## **Kate Buechler says**

I enjoyed this

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## **Sebastian Wocial says**

If you like playful, well-executed photography projects; a collection of 50 light-hearted and thought-provoking images, of alleged laws, that are teasingly iconoclastic and colorfully disobedient.

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## **Jon(athan) Nakapalau says**

Was not sure of the junction of what was really against the law and what was not - hence I could not embrace this work as the absurdist commentary I thought it was. Photos are nice enough.

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## **Jo says**

This what we used to call a coffee-table book. The forewords and interviews at the beginning of this book of photographs give an excellent background of how the idea came to be. Some of the photos are beautiful, some are clever, and some I would not want to show to my grandchildren. There is one for each state and reflects a law in that state--however, you find out from her foreword that some are not real. It would have been much better if there had been a note on each photo stating whether this was a real law or just myth or just made-up.

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## **Marie says**

Blech. What a disappointment.

Did you catch the subtitle? "Photographs by Olivia Locher of the Strangest Laws From Each of the 50 States" LIES! Well, that might be a little bit of an overstatement. Partial lies! In the Introduction, the author/photographer tells the reader that she collected the strange laws from social media and actual lawbooks, in combination. She said that she found that some were actually just urban legend. BUT THEN SHE PHOTOGRAPHED THEM ANYWAY. And doesn't tell the reader which are for real and which are urban legend! So this book is a weird one that'll be filed under both "fiction" and "nonfiction" in my Goodreads.

Second: the author/photographer definitely went for shock value. A good handful of the pics are borderline pornographic. I know, I know.... it's art! Even if the subject is nude its just art and not pornography! And I swear I'm not a prude. (Despite this being my second review in a week claiming too much blushing!) But I'll give you an example: one of the laws she photographed stated that it was illegal to have more than three

\*ahem\* *sexual aide toys* in one house. Would you want to see a photo of that?

Anyway, the bulk of the book was photos with very little text, so I didn't waste much time on it. Oh well.

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### **Danielle says**

This was my bad, but going in I honestly thought that the photographer traveled to each state and took the pictures there, which would have added to the statements. Most were taken in a studio - some were interesting, some I really hated. I was a little underwhelmed but I knew what it was going to be going in.

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### **Courtney says**

Ugh! I thought this was an interesting premise, but it's so poorly executed — it feels lazy and noncommittal.

The law "In Maine it is illegal to mail prescription drugs unless you are a licensed pharmacist" isn't a strange law...unless I'm missing something.

And then "In Massachusetts photographing up skirt photos may be considered a crime" how loosely is that worded and again, not strange.

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### **David Schaafsma says**

The "avant garde" poet Kenneth Goldsmith (who wrote "Uncreative Writing" and embraces the notion that "any language can be poetry" writes a foreword, and an interview with Locher by Eric Shiner opens this book, and Locher's hero Andy Warhol is all over it, which makes clear that Locher must be 2017 photography's absurdist "it" girl.

In *I Fought the Law* she creates silly photographs in response to laws--one from each state--she heard about or discovered (hey, google!), all of which amused her for some reason. And those laws, some of which Locher admits she later discovered were actually not laws, but myths or rumors about laws, are sometimes amusing, nevertheless.

\*In Alabama it is illegal to have an ice cream cone in your back pocket at all times.

Thus the cover. Except, as with others in this book, it never was illegal in Alabama. So what's the point, in this supposed project juxtaposing law and photography and humor? It's not clear. I think the point must be that because Locher is SO INTERESTING as a kind of "populist" anti-art photographer right now, that art can be anything she says it is, haw, which is fine, Warhol did it, Duchamp did it, but it is sort of (un-usefully) confusing here.

[Oh, and why WOULD having an ice cream cone in your back pocket BE illegal in some state? Because it could be used to attract horses which, if they follow you down the street, you can then steal, duh!]

IF these are actually laws, well, that would be interesting, since Locher creates staged photographs depicting

criminal offenses for each of them. Rebel Locher! I fought the law! Eh. . .

But as I began reading, I enjoyed the silliness of it:

\*In Arizona you may not have more than two dildos in a house [and of course, bad girl Locher shows us a dildo collection)

\*In California nobody is allowed to ride a bicycle in a swimming pool.

\*In Florida a person may not appear in public clothed in liquid latex.

\*In Utah no one may walk down the street carrying a paper bag with a violin.

So, okay, some are smile-worthy, maybe, in a middle school kinda way (of which as a parent of middle schoolers I generally approve), but then you never know which stated laws are actually laws and which are not, to which the absurdist Locher and Goldsmith would just say: Oh, you don't understand, think Andy Warhol, you are thinking too much, you are asking the wrong question, just smirk ironically and buy the book. (To which I say: Nope.)

[Oh, and if you have middle schoolers in your actual house, there is enough actual nakedness and sexual references, don't leave it around).[yep, that happened. Sorry, but it's Art kids! One of your Dad's Art Projects!]

Augh, with the daily onslaught of this Current Administration (today is the "s\*\*t storm" incident, day two) and its machination and its own absurd legal machinations, I just need a laugh once in a while, but now I am just wincing, confused about the "intellectual" purposes of this stuff. Augh! Farce

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## **Lili says**

This small volume is the collision of two of my favorite things: modern photography and legal studies. The three introductions frame the body of work appropriately: the project was the result of the photographer's thought experiment based on internet research; therefore, not all of the laws depicted are still on the books or even existed. The bulk of the volume consisted of a two-page spread for each of the fifty states: a full color photograph of the "strange law" on one page and a brief caption on the facing page.

I appreciated the thought that the photographer put into composing the volume. Most of the photographs were stunning, although some were explicit (so this is NOT an appropriate gift for children). The captions were clear. In some instances it was an interesting thought exercise to relate the caption to the photograph, although in most instances the relationship was obvious.

What I would have preferred to see is an epilogue of some sort that explained in just a few lines which laws were still on the books, which laws were off the books, and which laws were mythical. Just like the photographer's introduction had a few lines about the origin of the law in the cover photo, I would have appreciated that type of information about the rest of the laws. Nothing too detailed or over the top. The absence of such an epilogue, however, gave me an interesting thought project as I paused on each state and wondered whether the law was real, whether it was still on the books, and what its origins might have been. Some were very easy and straightforward to imagine - no fishing with dynamite, no dressing in latex in

public, no drinking perfume. Others were conundra - pickles must bounce.

Overall, I enjoyed the book for its lovely photographs and for making me think creatively. While I would have preferred to have been educated rather than creative, it was still fun to stretch the creative muscles for a spell. And if I feel the need to find out the true state of affairs, I can always do what the photographer did and turn to my good friend Google.

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**Jesse says**

Funny with very insightful opening essays

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