# 50 Weird Laws - mental_floss on YouTube (Ep.5)

List Show
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Hi, I'm John Green, welcome to my Salon, this is mental_floss on YouTube, and:

1. In 2009, it became illegal for groups, such as neighborhood associations, in the State of Vermont to ban clotheslines.

...is the first of 50 surprisingly illegal things you will learn about today.

[intro music]

2. Wisconsin has a law that you cannot "propel any stone, brick, or other missile at any railroad train." I think this means that you can technically drop a brick onto a railroad train, but no one's ever tested it.

3. In Arizona, you can not manufacture or distribute "imitation controlled substances," which I guess is why they don't film Breaking Bad there.

4. Virginia is currently trying to get rid of a law that makes it illegal for unmarried couples to cohabitate.

5. In Washington, DC, it is illegal to surf or water ski under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Which surprises me because... you can surf in Washington, D.C.?

6. Blasphemy laws used to be very common in the United States, but there are still some in existence, including in Michigan where cursing God is a G**-d*** misdemeanor.

7. Allowing dogs to pursue big game mammals, such as bears or bobcats, is illegal in California. We were surprised to learn that this was an issue, because our office dog runs away from squirrels - although to be fair, they are larger than her.

8. In Alaska, the only time it is illegal for a business to sell alcohol is between 5am and 8am. Which is unfortunate for parents of infants... because that's our primary party time.

9. Bad news for Damon Salvatore and Mike Tyson, boxing in Utah cannot feature any biting.

10. It's against to law to swear at players or officials during sporting events in Massachusetts, so I guess at the end of every Red Sox game, 37,000 people are taken into custody.

11. In New Hampshire, it is illegal to check into a hotel using a false name. So if Justin Bieber tours in New Hampshire, Beliebers, YOU CAN GET HIM. I mention that because we have a huge Belieber audience here at mental_floss... they'll be vocal in comments.

12. And speaking of false identities, at public places in Alabama you cannot pretend to be a minister, nun, priest, or rabbi, if you aren't one, thereby making productions of The Sound of Music technically illegal. I mean, unless the nuns are played by nuns.

13. In Aspen, Colorado, you're not allowed to throw snowballs OR missiles. What do people do for fun there?

14. In Texas, officials aren't allowed to be, "excluded from holding office on account of his religious sentiments, provided he acknowledges the existence of a Supreme Being." So I guess women can be atheists... just kidding, they aren't allowed to vote.

15. Picking up seaweed off the beach at night is illegal in New Hampshire. But only at night... Oh, New Hampshire, that's not what people do on the beach at night.

16. Bingo games can't last more than five hours in North Carolina, which is great news if, like me, you find Bingo boring after 4 minutes.

17. Here in my home state of Indiana, you're not allowed to sniff glue with, "intent to cause a condition of intoxication, euphoria, excitement, exhilaration, stupefaction, or dulling of the senses." So if you're doing it for other reasons, that's fine.

18. Adultery is still a crime in New York. Spitzer. Giuliani. Weiner. Paterson. FDR. Can we just pause, by the way, to acknowledge that one of FDR's mistresses was named Missy LeHand? Thank you.

19. Rhode Island has a law against biting off the limbs of another person. It's a shame you have to legislate things like that, but I, you know, guess it will be good for when the zombies come...

20. Floridians are prohibited from salting railroad tracks for, "the purpose of attracting cattle thereto."

21. The Gateway Sexual Behavior Law in Tennessee prevents teachers from even talking about hand-holding to students.

22. You can't sell your eye in Texas. And they say they're all about freedom.

23. In South Carolina, dance halls are not allowed to be within a quarter-mile of a rural church or cemetery.

24. South Carolina also requires their dance halls to be closed on Sundays. It's almost like they don't like dancing.

25. In 1974, Florida passed a law allowing the state to ban alcohol sales during hurricanes.

26. Similarly, Utah doesn't allow the sale of alcohol during emergencies, which is tragic, because that's when you need alcohol the most. I mean, the only way I know how to start a fire is to open up my copy of Eugenia Porter's [sic] *Beauty from Ashes*, pull out the Jack Daniels, and get that fire started. I just want to point out that my copy of *Beauty from Ashes* features a quote from Isaiah, "to give unto them beauty from ashes, the oil of joy for mourning"... and then the booze.

27. You're not allowed to "mutilate, deface, disfigure or injure" rocks in Colorado state parks. That's pretty granola, I mean, the next thing you know they'll legalize weed or something... what? Really? Hmm.

28. In Washington state, you are not allowed to use x-ray equipment for shoe fittings. Don't worry Dorothy, they fit.

29. Connecticut just repealed a law that prevented people from keeping town records where liquor was sold.

30. In Wyoming, fishing may not involve "a firearm of any kind or nature." You literally cannot shoot fish in a barrel.

31. Playing an R-rated movie at a drive-in theater is illegal in Delaware... even when it's a really great movie, like Sex and the City 2. Meredith, did you write that joke? You did. I can tell.

32. Attempting to, "corrupt the public morals" makes you guilty of a misdemeanor in Florida. So I assume Ke$ha is banned for life. By the way, is it Kee$ha or Ke$ha? I never know how to pronounce the dollar sign.

33. You can't live on a boat for more than 30 days during a calendar year in the State of Georgia. Thanks to Carnival Cruises, I'm not

interested.

34. Southington, Connecticut, banned silly string in 1996.

35. If someone is under 21 in Illinois, but participating in a culinary arts program, they are permitted to drink alcohol.

36. Damaging a vending machine is illegal in the town of Derby, Kansas. Even if you're really frustrated because you paid for those Cool Ranch Doritos, and you desperately need those Cool Ranch Doritos and... GIMME MY DORITOS!

37. In Wisconsin, "no person may require an individual to undergo the implanting of a microchip." ONLY IN WISCONSIN?

38. Billboards are illegal in Hawaii. Which explains why my favorite Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen movie, Billboard Dad, does NOT take place in Hawaii.

39. Street photographers aren't allowed to stay at one place for more than five minutes to take pictures in Washington, DC. Why don't we make that the law everywhere, paparazzi?

40. Hypnotizing people is illegal in Everett, Washington.

41. Enfield, New Hampshire, prohibits hunting in cemeteries. Which how else are you going to fight the zombie apocalypse?

42. People with sexually transmitted diseases are not allowed to get married in Nebraska.

43. Tanning facilities in Iowa must come with a warning sign. Are they exempt if they post a picture of Snooki? No? That law could use some amending.

44. Doors to public buildings in Florida must open outward, and yet having grown up there, I can tell you, I still never knew whether to push or pull.

45. Reno, Nevada doesn't allow people to lie down on sidewalks. To which I say, what is the point of my coming to your town, staying up all night while gambling away my life savings and marrying a hooker, if I cannot then rest for a while on your beautiful sun-baked sidewalks?

46. It is illegal to "cause a CATastrophe" in Utah.

47. Enticing or persuading teenagers to buy alcohol in Tennessee is illegal. Because, you know, they need so much persuasion...

48. You can be fined in Oregon for leaving your car door open too long.

49. Oregon also has a law preventing improper disposal of human waste while you're on the road. So I'm glad I didn't set my novel *Paper Towns* there.

50. And lastly, it is illegal to be drunk on a train in Michigan but once that train enters Ohio, shots for everybody.

Thanks for watching mental_floss, which is brought to you with the help of these lovely people. Every week we answer one of your mind blowing questions here at the end of the video. Someone asked, "Did Abraham Lincoln actually have a secretary named Kennedy?" No! Kennedy did have a secretary named Lincoln, but that was a coincidence. Please submit more mind blowing questions in the comments, and thanks for watching us here at mental_floss.