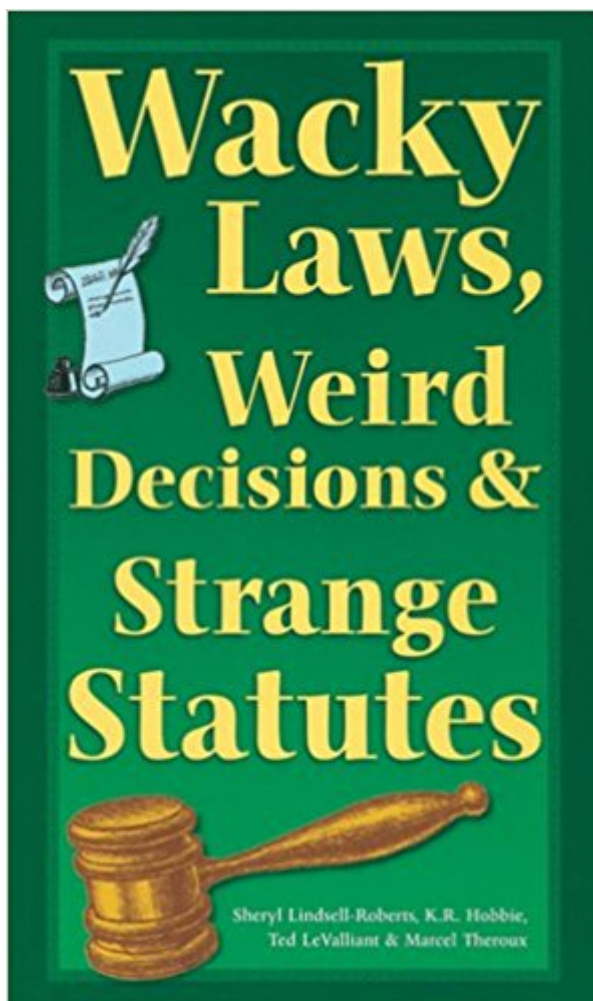




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Wacky Laws, Weird Decisions, & Strange Statutes



Synopsis

There ought to be a law against making laws this wacky! But since there isn't, why not have fun with the silliest statutes, looniest lawsuits, and dumbest decisions on record? Who ever thought a law book would be funnier than a joke book? Well it is--just take a look at these: Children under the age of seven can't attend college in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Anyone flying over Maine should remember: it's illegal there to step out of the plane while it's in the air. And why can't the chicken cross the road in Quitman, Georgia? Because it's "fowl" criminal behavior. That's just the beginning, because this collection also uncovers some of the most incredible, unbelievable lawsuits, government grants, and court verdicts. For example, the United States Navy spent \$792 for a designer doormat. A psychic sued doctors because she lost her "aura" after a brain scan. Each fact is stranger than the one before!

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Customer Reviews

the things you learn lol

This is very interesting and funny what kinds of laws actually exist. It makes you wonder what was going on in these peoples minds.

Ranging from one sentence to a page length, the four authors compiled a selection of legal related situations that appears to lack common sense. The book is arranged into five sections; On the Books: Outlandish Statutes, Ridiculous Lawsuits, Government waste, Courtroom Antics, and

What's the Verdict. They range from amusing to annoying. Although an index is provided, there are no footnotes or endnotes.

There's an old Calvin & Hobbes Sunday strip where Calvin takes his tiger out into the woods, signs the landscape, and offers to sell it to Hobbes as a work of art. "It doesn't match my furniture," Hobbes says, walking away, leaving Calvin to observe that the problem with being avant-garde is knowing who's putting on whom. That strip was the first thing that I thought of when I read in this book about a real-life incident in which the National Endowment of Arts gave a government grant to an artist who boarded a small aircraft and threw small crepe streamers into the sky, claiming that her work called attention to the higher spirit of mankind. Bill Watterson probably only THOUGHT that he was kidding. "Wacky Laws" is yet another book about some of the strange incidents that find their way into the legal system and some of the strange decisions that make their way OUT of the system. However, this book also has a separate section on "Government Waste" detailing some of the more outre projects on which our money is being spent - which is where the above story comes from. As you might expect, this book also has the usual collection of blue laws that defy belief - and some that don't. I don't think that it's too much of a mental strain to figure out why some ancient Wisconsin legislators made it illegal to serve apple pie in their state without a cheese topping. But why would the city fathers of Macomb, Illinois make it illegal for an automobile to impersonate a wolf? It must be the only city in the world whose in-custody defendants would have to wait for trial parked in a garage. The last section contains a number of true-life cases, in which the reader is asked to apply the law to the facts and compare his decision with that of the trial courts and appellate courts who heard the same case. As a member of the bar, I missed a fair number of these, and I can't help but wonder if I didn't over-analyze them. Quite possibly, the average non-attorney reader who doesn't find himself wondering what the authors were leaving out will do better than the average attorney. Then again, I'm not sure that the authors always described the facts correctly or were always aware of which facts were important (there is nothing in this volume to indicate that any of the four authors are attorneys themselves) or that the decisions handed down at the time would necessarily be arrived at today. We are told, for instance, that a homicide victim's statement to a nurse that her husband had poisoned her was thrown out of court as "classic hearsay". Well, I'd assumed that she'd made that statement while conscious of her impending death - which would certainly have made it admissible as a "dying declaration" in most jurisdictions. And I have a hard time believing that an insurance company negligently issuing a policy that gave the beneficiary a motive for murder could really be held civilly liable for the murder of the insured by the beneficiary.

That really sounds like a highly speculative Palsgraf-like chain of causation, determinable only with hindsight. Wouldn't ANY policy of life insurance provide its beneficiary with the same motive? Still, this book is recommended as pleasant light instructive reading on a subject that fascinates so many of those who DON'T practice it for a living and especially recommended for readers who think that they could do a better job than those who do.

Although there are several mistakes in this book such as the first line, in the Sate of West Virginia, well then there is the cases at the end of the book where you are suppose to go to different pages to find the trial court decisions as well as appeals court, one I noticed was missing and others were located on other pages. That being said I did enjoy this book, it was very strange that some of these laws actually made it on the books, what I would be interested to know is what lead up to them. Very funny read and excellent gift I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in law or just funny crap.

The other reviewers are overanalyzing a book that is meant to be funny. Funny is what you get. Yes, these laws are old and should be repealed, but that's what makes it so funny. It's illegal to have a bathtub in your house unless it has feet. This is perfect light reading to take along with you when you're waiting in a doctor's office or anytime you're stressed out. You read, you laugh, you relax, you feel better. Forget an apple a day, read a page a day to keep the doctor away!

The very first sentence is "In the sate [sic] of West Virginia, it's against the law to sneeze on a train." It might make a good gag gift for an English major, but I don't recommend reading it; the whole book is filled with typos and short, dry descriptions. If you like weird laws, there are much better books that at least have funny commentary.

Funny book showing just how stupid people are in making laws that have no ending or make no sense in today's world. Politicians need to read it and repeal some of these silly laws instead of making more.

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