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## THE WEIRDEST LAWS IN AMERICA, PHOTOGRAPHED: BEHIND THE SCENES WITH OLIVIA LOCHER

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It all began with ice cream. When photographer Olivia Locher was told in passing that it was illegal to have an ice cream cone in one's back pocket in several states, she was inspired to do some research to see if there were other equally bizarre laws throughout U.S. history and urban legend. She wasn't disappointed.

Her photo project *I Fought the Law*, now in book form, documents the strangest laws from each of the 50 states, ranging from topics like spitting on a seagull (Virginia) to wearing transparent clothing (Rhode Island). Here, Olivia shares some of her favorite behind the scenes photographs from the project, along with the hilarious stories that accompany them.

Alabama: It is illegal to have an ice cream cone in your back pocket at all times.

"I was visiting my family in Pennsylvania when the impulse struck to go out and make this image happen. I knew I'd never be able to get a perfect ice cream cone back to my studio, so instead I brought the studio to the local ice cream stand. The team was me, my friend Jackie to model, and my mom and brother to assist me. Little did we know we would attract a much larger crowd.

We unloaded our car with a large purple canvas that I painted to serve as a backdrop and off we went to get a cone. We found our way to a wooded area behind the stand and my brother held up the backdrop. Jackie put the cone in her shorts and we waited for it to perfectly melt. It was a hot August day, making the ice cream stand an even more popular attraction, and my mom stood by and talked to all the confused observers. Afterwards, we all treated ourselves to cones, and to my surprise, when I did laundry that evening, the stain came completely out of the shorts."

California: Nobody is allowed to ride a bicycle in a swimming pool.

"Photographing the Californian ban on biking in swimming pools image was incredibly fun to make. Of course, this law pertained to empty pools, but I thought it'd be all the more fun to bike in a full pool. My brother served as my model and

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his friend Gerald offered up both his bike and swimming pool. We all swam together and then I had Brandon put on a pair of blue swim trunks, goggles, and a cap. If you look closely at the wheels of the bike you will see blue swim noodles, they allowed for the bike to float. Gerald helped Brandon get his balance, swam away, and then I shot from on top the high dive.”

Mississippi: Sesame Street was banned from television in 1970.

“The ban on Sesame Street image was humorous to make, and became a Locher family event. My friend Derek and his friend Felipe volunteered to model, and the entire day before the shoot I ran around picking up supplies, body paint, clown noses, swim caps, and more. I was running out of time but still couldn’t find a crucial item—Ernie’s sweater. I rummaged through every thrift store in driving distance and was about to call Derek to reschedule, when I miraculously found the perfect sweater in the women’s section. Back at the house with all my supplies, I started painting both Derek and Felipe, but my mom soon suggested that she take over. She slopped makeup on the both with the heaviest hand, and it was creepily perfect. We made our way to the living room, taped a wonky piece of photography background to the wall, and the rest is history.”