

## There ought to be a law . . .

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In order to own gun there is a legal protocol that must be followed. There's a background check, the purchaser must be of legal age, and after a mandatory waiting period you will become the proud owner of a firearm.

Some gun owners opt to take safety classes, which is fabulous. It amazes me that with all a person has to go through in order to purchase a firearm, any idiot with enough cash or high enough credit limit can go into any big box retailer and buy their very own digital camera to go about town shooting whatever they choose... without warning.

Most of my friends, family, acquaintances (and a lady I met on the subway while visiting New York City) know that I am a little peculiar about having my photo taken. I've even noticed a few of them cringe when someone says, "Let's find someone to take a quick picture of all of us." Silly, silly people. The stars, moon, and planets have to be in perfect alignment for me to approve a snapshot. I demand 100 percent veto power. And usually get it except when my children were born.

For obvious reasons, I didn't get a chance to approve the photos that would fill empty Humpty Dumpty frames in our baby's nursery. This was before the instant gratification of digital cameras. You can imagine my surprise when I picked up the developed film and saw the shot of my husband, our first child and some strange looking woman. This woman had my hair but a nose like Gerard Depardieu and a face so swollen you could barely make out the existence of eyes. The next photo was a shot of me and our little guy right after he was born. Even though I looked like someone stuck an air hose in my neck and forgot to shut it off, it was a moment captured I'd never want to forget.

When a friend came to visit and noticed the photo she said, "Awe. Look at him. You look HUGE!" That was the last time my husband was allowed to take pictures. This explains why there are very few pictures of me during the first years of my children's life.

When digital cameras came on the scene I thought my prayers had been answered. Then facebook came along, and photos starting popping up. They weren't just popping up; they were being "tagged" so your "friends" could see them.

One afternoon while snooping on facebook, a message came through that there was a new "tagged" photo of me. In it I was standing beside my child's stroller, still wearing maternity clothes and had just taken a very large bite of a hamburger. I couldn't believe it. How dare her. I immediately untagged it.

For a couple of weeks we went back and forth. She'd tag the photo, I'd untag it. For that reason, she's no longer a friend on facebook. (Facebook has made it so much easier to break up with friends) It's not that I don't like taking a stroll down memory lane, but I refuse to do it with mustard on my kaftans and a triple chin.

Not long ago, Angel and I had to get a photo taken together that would appear on promotional materials. After much debate, airbrushing and photoshopping, our photographer created an acceptable publicity shot. A few months later I met someone who had only seen this particular photo. She shook my hand and said, "Wow! You don't look anything like your picture! I need to get your photographer to redo my driver's license picture." I'm not positive but I think she insulted me.

Call me shallow, call me vain but I'll say this: if there were tougher laws on owning cameras there'd be fewer friendships lost on facebook and acceptable snapshots of pregnant women.

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