**Examples of Puritan Laws:**

(There are so many more, but these should give you insights into their thinking.)

1. 1. Beachcombing is illegal.  
   2. Hunting ducks is illegal. (If you’re a bad shot, they thought you would waste resources and time)  
   3. Drama/theatre, erotic poetry, and religious music, gambling, are banned. (Remember, these are the ones who closed down Shakespeare’s theatre.)  
   4. Any form of idleness or laziness. (Yawn . . . I’m sorry! I’m sorry!)  
   5. Swearing, sleeping during sermons, skipping church will be punished.  
   6. Long hair will not be tolerated. You can see a painting of a Roundhead Puritan haircut [here:](http://www.oceansbridge.com/oil-paintings/product/73966/puritanroundhead)  
   7. Gluttony is forbidden.  
   8. Religious instruction is required for all, as well as public fasting, austere living, and evening curfew. (According to one town’s records, a man was imprisoned for three days for smiling during a baptism.)  
   9. Entertainments, theaters, festivals, were banned.

10. Puritans prescribed the death penalty for sex outside of marriage.

11. Lord Macaulay said the Puritans “hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but

because it gave pleasure to the spectators.”

12. The Puritans also opposed dancing, drinking, card playing, gambling, listening to certain types

of music, reading novels or poetry, rolling dice, going to horse races, wearing jewelry and

makeup.  
 13. The celebration of Christmas was even forbidden in Massachusetts on pain of a five-shilling

fine. In England, the Puritan Parliament “prohibited the observance of Christmas, Easter,

Whitsunday, saints’ days and holy days.”  
 14. All work, play, brewing, and travel were forbidden on Sunday (which they called the Sabbath).

There was even a debate on whether a man could be rescued from a well on that day. Folks

were punished for picking strawberries, playing cards, smoking, and sailing. In 1670, a couple

was brought to trial for “sitting together on the Lord’s Day under an apple tree.” Sex on Sunday

was out of the question. This was particularly a problem for children born on Sunday, because

Puritans believed that people were born on the same day on which they were conceived.

Sunday-born children were sometimes denied baptism for this reason. A minister name Israel

Loring was very strict in this regard until his own wife gave birth to twins on a Sunday.

***Punishments***for violating Puritan laws included fines, imprisonment, pillory, stocks, whipping, hanging, tar and feathering, ears being cut off, occasionally burning, and once in America, a man was drawn and quartered, ducking stool (reserved for women who gossip or ridicule their husbands) and humiliation (wearing letters indicating your crime etc.,) and even a hot awl through your tongue if you spoke against religion.

**Today**

Existing Sunday *Blue Laws* are a hangover from those Puritan days.  
*List provided by author Rickey Pittman.*