



Written by [Becky Akers](#) on December 6, 2010

Why Are You Still Flying?

I'm trying to sympathize with the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) multitudes of victims. I truly am. But honestly, how dumb can they be?

With reports flooding the country of the TSA's atrocities, with its thugs ogling and sexually assaulting passengers, [soaking survivors of cancer](#) in their own urine, [forcing others to remove](#) their prostheses, and [terrifying toddlers](#), why would anyone voluntarily enter American aviation's gulag? It's sorta like the guy who plunges into the ocean despite the signs posted everywhere about swarming sharks: sure, you're horrified and outraged when Jaws swallows him for lunch, but at the same time, part of you thinks, Sheesh, what a moron!

Now let's say Mr. Lunch barely escaped from the sharks when he pulled the same stunt the week before.



Which brings us to Stacey Armato. She's the [new mother the TSA savaged](#) when she dared request that it abide by its own rules — the attorney the agency imprisoned for over an hour in a glass cage at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, publicly humiliating her and deliberately keeping her from her flight. Lawyer Armato cannily requested the surveillance tapes of her ordeal from the TSA; predictably, the agency stalled and stonewalled but finally released an edited version a few weeks ago. She immediately posted it to the Internet, on November 25, 2010 — which is why we're only now hearing about her travail though it happened in February.

And yes, that was before the TSA's recent, incredibly brazen crimes. But it's not as though the agency turned brutal overnight. It has preyed on passengers from the very start, [attacking expectant mothers and imprisoning their husbands](#) for defending them, [molesting](#) retired schoolteachers, [slaughtering](#) missionaries, creating such a climate of fear and hysteria that [women distraught at being treated like terrorists](#) wind up dead, [punishing dissidents](#).

But even without these examples and thousands of others, the TSA's anti-constitutionality is warning enough that you risk your life, liberty, dignity, and privacy when you fly commercially. The Founding Fathers understood government's inherent, immutable violence, its obscenity and bloodlust. They knew it for the vilest of curses, not the blessing modern politicians pretend, and they sought to bind it down from its mischief with the chains of the Constitution. When government snaps those chains, when politicians and bureaucrats unleash the State on us, are we not fools to put ourselves in harm's way?

So as Ms. Armato relates her tale of yet another shocking, utterly evil barbarity from the TSA, I wonder why she — or anyone else — is still flying. What job, vacation, meeting, honeymoon, or reunion can



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justify running the TSA's gauntlet?

Nonetheless, [Ms. Armato tells us](#), "I travel every week and bring home [to Los Angeles - at 356 miles' distance, a 6-hour drive] breast milk with me through Phoenix Sky Harbor ... and I almost never had a problem ... until the week before this screening. I was held for 30 minutes that week while the TSA manager called to find out the rules." After heaping various insults and abuses on Ms. Armato, screeners "finally let me through. I called and complained to TSA and was instructed to travel with the TSA breast milk rules printed out and present them whenever there is a problem."

Which she does the next week. Unfortunately, "I notice immediately that I was dealing with the same people from the week before. The woman tells me right away that my milk might have to go through the x-ray, and then I tell her I printed the rules. I go to grab the rules on top of my bag and she freaks out and pushes my arm away. Another guy comes over and calls for "back up" and they put in me (*sic*) back in the glass cage. Standing 50 ft. away are the same manager and supervisor I had dealt with the previous week."

They "detain" (*sic* for "arrest." Technically speaking, the TSA can't arrest anyone, so it "detains" us instead. This distinction probably doesn't matter to the frantic victim, but police states make much of such quibbles) Ms. Armato in their glass cage for much of the next hour — long enough to ensure she misses her flight. During that time, she "starts crying. ... a Phoenix PD comes to calm me down. I explain to him that there is no reason I should be treated this way and I have every right to be upset. He then says 'they' (aka TSA) saw me coming, have it out for me (from my complaint against TSA the week before when they didn't know the breast milk rules then either), and I should travel out of a different gate in future weeks. He said TSA wants me to play along with their horse and pony show and if I don't then TSA can have the Phoenix PD arrest me! Well, I wanted to get home to my baby and my flight was 30 minutes from departure so I 'played along.' "

Ms. Armato is comforted that "Three Phoenix PD watched in the background ... I could tell they all knew this was a waste of their time but I was happy to have them standing by in case TSA continued to act out of line. One police officer actually came up to me ... asking if I was okay and if he could let anyone in my party know I was going to be late. A class act compared to the TSA actions."

And not the Phoenix PD's usual MO when dealing with tearful ladies. In 2007, its [cops arrested Carol Anne Gotbaum](#) as she was changing planes at Sky Harbor on her way to a detox center. Ms. Gotbaum became understandably anxious when her airline bumped her from her flight; the Phoenix PD arrived to "calm her down," too. Before it was over, Ms. Gotbaum was dead in a cell at the airport, having strangled herself in her own handcuffs. Yes, that's impossible, but it's also the official story from Ms. Armato's "class act."

The TSA insists that "All pat-downs [*sic* for 'sexual assaults'] are only conducted by same-gender officers," but Ms. Armato's video proves that this is yet another lie: a goon who appears to be a man releases her from her prison so he can molest her. After this humiliation, "the TSA manager tells me I can leave security, redistribute the milk into half full containers (his completely made-up rule) and go through security all over again if I want to avoid x-rays on the milk.... I did that."

But "I also missed my flight playing along with his ridiculous game."

Yes, the TSA's flouting its own rules is scandalous, disgusting, infuriating — and also totally typical. Ditto on its punitive inhumanity to this young woman.

But when you swim with sharks, expect to become lunch.



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Becky Akers, an expert on the American Revolution, writes frequently about issues related to security and privacy. Her articles and columns have been published by *Lewrockwell.com*, *The Freeman*, *Military History Magazine*, *American History Magazine*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *New York Post*, and other publications.

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Photo: Patricia Stone and her husband John Richards of Chandler hold signs Nov. 24, 2010 at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport to protest body scanners and thorough pat-downs: AP Images



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