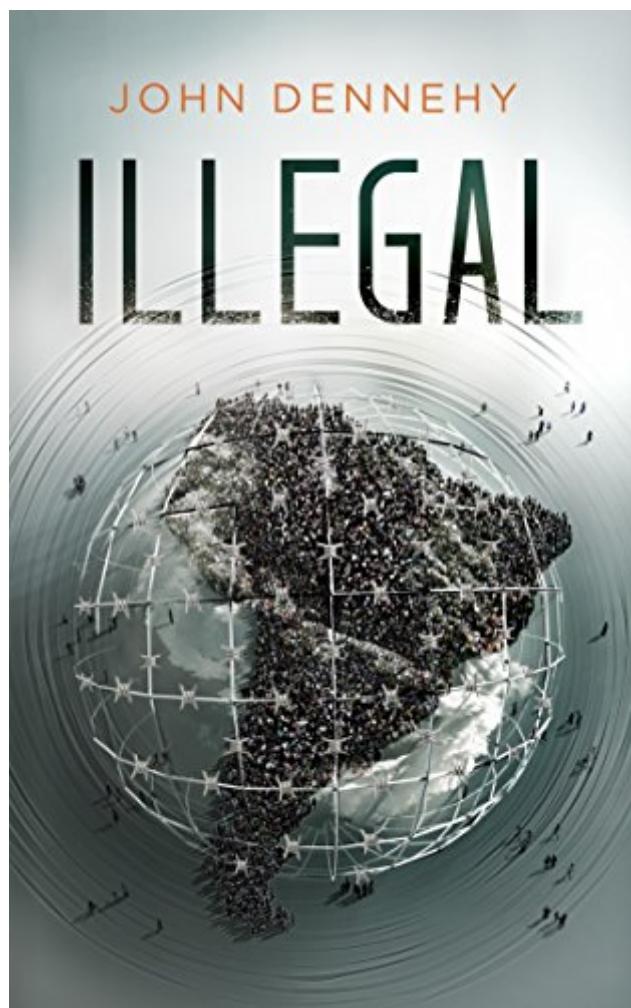


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# Illegal: A True Story Of Love, Revolution And Crossing Borders



## **Synopsis**

Illegal tells the true story of love and deception, revolutions and deportations as it chronicles the escapades and the trials of John Dennehy. A New Yorker, Dennehy refuses to be part of the feverish nationalism of post 9/11 America. His search for hope in the midst of choicelessness takes him to Ecuador, where he falls in love with firebrand Lucia, who perfects his broken Spanish and they find solidarity in the brewing social revolution. Dennehy is deported but he has found something worth fighting for. This pulsating story of violent protests, illegal border crossings and loss of innocence raises questions about the futility of borders and irresistible power of nationalism.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

In *Illegal*, journalist John Dennehy takes readers on a guided tour of the precarious border crossings he took shortly after the reelection of George W. Bush. One such crossing ended with his deportation back to the United States from Ecuador. And yet he was driven to sneak back into that country by a blinding love, and a life that often seemed--and would often prove--too good to be entirely true. His decision to live outside the US was the result of his many brushes with an uptick in

nationalism there, including getting beaten up by a mob in the streets of New York because he dared protest the lead-up to the Iraq War. *Illegal* is narrative journalism and autobiography that goes by quickly at about 200 pages. But Dennehy uses his own story as a lens through which to address issues much larger than himself. It's not just self-indulgent travel porn. In a very self-aware, earnest way, he asks big questions. Is it possible to maintain your most deeply held beliefs and goals in the face of bruising reality? If goods are allowed to cross borders freely, why can't people (with the minimum amount of necessary security in place)? Are people who they are or are they who we perceive them to be and who they present themselves as? At the outset of *Illegal*, Dennehy is a recent college graduate with a robust set of ideals. As the story progresses he doesn't lose them but they are tempered. One gets the sense that were the story to begin with an older, more mature Dennehy, he might have been able to get close to anticipating the very mess his country is in now.

A powerful first hand account of love and separation, this book had tears streaming down my cheeks by page 16. Its engrossing story and steady pace kept me, a slow reader who rarely finishes a book, hooked from start to finish. A rare glimpse into a painful reality gives the reader a personal connection to a geopolitical discussion that desperately needs more attention. I 100% recommend this book to anyone with a beating heart.

This is an amazing book! A must read. If you are a traveler, historian, fan of memoirs, need to escape, want to question or are socially aware, this book needs to be in your hands. This is a story which takes place a decade ago but is more relevant in 2017. It offers a fresh perspective on borders, what they are and how these artificial lines can control a persons fate, ability to succeed in life and love. John Dennehy is able to tap into the pureness and vulnerability delivered by Jack Kerouac , the insight and challenge which William Burroughs offered and the insanity and mischievousness of Hunter S. Thompson. However, these comparisons are only for those readers who need comparisons. You will find within 30 pages that John Dennehy stands on his own pedestal along side them. This book transports you, makes you wonder, makes you cry, breaks your heart, gives you hope and ultimately makes your dream of what could be.

*Illegal* does not pull any punches in it's delivery of facts, but finds multiple ways to deliver one of the most fascinating true stories of the year. When I heard about John Dennehy, I realized that he was a fellow New York based author and wanted to see his work for myself. Having bought, read and thoroughly enjoyed Dennehy's work, I can say that I am glad that I found him. This book will

captivate you from beginning to end and will make you think twice about putting it down. It's that good! Do not miss this title!

John Dennehy's memoir of love, life and illegally crossing borders in beautiful, but tumultuous Ecuador is told with vulnerability, honesty and is absolutely riveting. *Illegal* made me feel like I was hidden in the pages of Dennehy's passport - unsure of what was going to happen next, longing for a life that may have disappeared, never wanting the adventure to end.

A great book, Treats the experiences of a foreigner in South America, It's a very entertaining book highly recommended. I have the pleasure of having met the author on his journey through Ecuador, John is a great person.

What a wonderful read. Exciting from start to finish. This book really paints a vivid picture in your mind that makes you feel like you are standing right beside John during his journey. Highly recommended!

I must admit that when I saw "Illegal" in its crowd-funding days on an American crowdfunding platform which I don't want to mention by name, I never made much of it. See, I'm not big on memoirs. After I've learned that this American Crowdfunding Publishing firm had decided to give "Illegal" the boot (in a very non-affable manner) I've decided to give it a chance. And boy am I glad that I did! John Dennehy recalls from memory and scribbles, the account of his life in Ecuador as an "Illegal gringo", during days in which the country have seen turmoil and citizen unrest, coup d'etat and more. He has been living in the heart of it all, a privilege kid from the states, who decided (post 9/11 and the growing nationalism Iraq war) to start a clean slate. John teaches English in a few Ecuadorian institutes, falls in love with the beautiful Lucia, and become one of the locals in the city of Latacunga, a relatively unknown and un-touristical place. The writing is virgin, if not naive, which makes this novel so endearing. John account of events is interesting, in a way which will hold you by the collar and literally would not let you drop the book (or Kindle Device). The author emphasizes throughout the novel the difference between reality as he sees it and common perceptions in the US, by publishing the State Department's travel warnings in regards to countries such as Ecuador and Colombia. We also grow with him, and see how he evolves and get disillusioned with the romance of revolution, connecting the sites in the end of his story to the same nationalism he had fled from, in the states. A must read for anyone with an open mind, for travel lovers, for "mochileros",

and for even for fiction lovers like myself! 5 stars with no doubt.

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