

**OUTLAW CHOPPERS**

A book review by  
Dr. Gizmo Doodad

I have been anticipating the arrival of Mike Seates' new book, *Outlaw Choppers*. I recently saw the book advertised in a catalog, so I knew it had been released. I found my copy of *Outlaw Choppers* waiting for me when I came home from work the other day. The folks at MBI Publishing have been more than generous to me when it comes to sending me promotional copies of their latest books.

First of all, I must admit that the book was not what I had anticipated. I was expecting a rehash of the history of custom motorcycles along with period photos. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the bikes featured were relatively new constructions built to ride and not to be towed around from show to show. You won't find any overdone, over-weight, or over-blown choppers in Mike Seates' chronicle about today's custom choppers.

Mike defines an outlaw chopper as a basic piece of motorcycle transportation that is composed only of the parts necessary for the vehicle to operate in the area of the country where the builder lives. Professional builders, on the other hand, must fabricate customs built to order while still obeying federal and state vehicle laws.

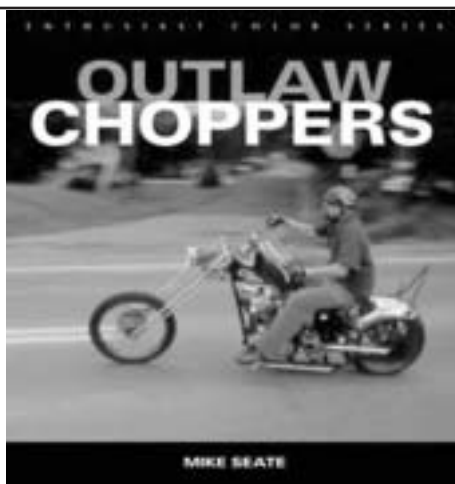
While the new, old-school chops are intended to mimic those of 50 years ago, the new school customs are built using the latest tech and design ideas. Though, one question still remains. Can a manufactured motorcycle be a chopper, or can a chopper only be fastened together by a regular guy in his under-lit, under-funded home garage? I guess that this is just a rhetoric question that only the reader can answer?

This anthology is divided into four chapters. These sub-titles speak for themselves. West Coast Cool, East Coast Choppers, Radical Rides, and Badass Bobbers. Admittedly Badass Bobbers was my favorite section. Bobbers, the stripped down stock Harley, Indian and Brit bikes that appeared after WWII, were the grand daddy's of today's outlaw choppers. If it were not for the bobber, sometime called the digger, and the road version of a combination racebike/hillclimber, the choppers of today would certainly not exist.

Though you have probably heard of most of the builders named in this book; a good number of the artists profiled may be short of famous, but long on talent, and their work stands up to anyone, anywhere, in any part of the country.

The author has written many motorcycle related books, is a columnist for a major Pittsburgh, PA newspaper and a national magazine and has appeared on several cable television shows.

*Outlaw Choppers* is a softbound book containing 95 pages and 93 full color photographs and is available directly from MBI Publishing Company. You can order through their toll free number at 1-800-826-6600 or the internet at [motorbooks.com](http://motorbooks.com) The book is also available from your local bookseller.



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