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**THE RISE OF RAD • THE INFLUENCE OF THE URETHANE REVOLUTION**

**J u l y 2 4 - S e p t e m b e r 4 , 2 0 1 0**

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Erupting from the Californian surf scene and branching out into music, language, street art and street clothing, skateboard culture has spanned the globe with its focus on individuality, freedom and a transgressive mixture of sport and play. This exhibition will focus on contemporary art that can trace its roots to this sub-culture-gone-mainstream, exploring urban architecture, resistance, and the core values of the skate phenomenon through the matrix of urban theory and politics. It will utilize theoretical, historical, sociological and contemporary art facets to fully explore how a Californian children's toy went through technological advances that led to a revolution throughout youth culture and, in turn, spread to the world and impacted culture from the street to the museum.



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# STREETSTYLE: SKATEBOARDING, SPATIAL APPROPRIATION, AND DISSENT

by Taro Nettleton

***Los Angeles may be planned or designed in a very fragmentary sense...but it is infinitely envisioned.*** -Mike Davis, City of Quartz

If Los Angeles needed to be imagined prior to its existence, as Mike Davis contends in City of Quartz, the same might be said of skateboarding. Historically, Los Angeles was a mirage in the desert whose existence depended upon the realization of a fantasy to see water in its arid landscape. Likewise, skateboarding in its initial stages—as a byproduct of another, paradigmatically Southern Californian youth-subculture, surfing—was premised on the ability of its inventors to imagine water in concrete. Skateboarding was born out of a desire to see concrete waves in the seemingly endless, concrete-laid Californian suburban sprawl. Skateboarding’s initially close ties to surf culture is revealed in its now largely retired alias, “sidewalk surfing.” Surfing was and continues to be popularly understood as a benign subcultural pastime. As Rayner Banham explains in his Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, surfing may be understood as one of a particularly Californian brand of “private and harmless gratifications.”<sup>1</sup> Surfing’s perceived innocuousness is partly the result of a tacit understanding that any danger surfing poses—such as drowning, impalation on coral reefs, shark attacks—will only ever be suffered by the surfer. Surfing also works perfectly within the foundational

myths that helped the initial waves of massive immigration to California: the cults of the body, health, and sun. According to these myths, the same climate conditions that bred “taller, broader-shouldered, thicker chested” college girls would have comparable effects on surfer boys.<sup>2</sup> Through the mainstream success enjoyed by films such as John Milius’s cult classic, Big Wednesday (1978), and musicians such as Dick Dale, Jan and Dean, and the Beach Boys,<sup>3</sup> the image of the surfer boy projected itself everywhere, producing enduring images of sunny southern California and exporting the surfer identity to be freely taken on even in places which had no access to waves.

In spite of its historical ties to surfing, skateboarding enjoyed none of its predecessor’s luck. To borrow Mike Davis’ dialectical characterization of Los Angeles, skateboarding can be seen as the “noir” counterpart to surfing’s “sunshine.” The primitiveness of the violence out of which skateboards were born was of an entirely different order than the innocently primitive spirituality that drove surfboard shapers. The birth of the skateboard was characterized by a kind of primitiveness that civilization would prefer to leave behind. Yet surfboard “shaping”—the attempt to fashion the smoothest possible surface out of wood, and later fiberglass—was equated with spiritual pursuit despite its obvious emphasis on surface. Consequently the search for perfectly smooth surfaces was incorporated into the works of artists such as John McCracken<sup>4</sup> and celebrated as a part of a definitive L.A. aesthetic. The skateboard, on the other hand, as Jay “Boy” Adams, a cult icon and veteran of professional skateboarding puts it, “was based on tearing apart rollerskates.”

Fairly early on in its history<sup>5</sup>, skateboarding got a Life magazine cover story, in the May 14, 1965 issue entitled

**“Skateboard Mania—and Menace.”** This story finds itself amidst other cultural-interest articles such as “see through Sweaters—knitwear joins the trend on nudity,” and “Space-Walk—Cosmonaut’s Story.” The generally hostile tone of the article is established in the first sentence—“That thing 19 year-old Pat McGee is balancing on is a skateboard, the most exhilarating and dangerous joy-riding device this side of the hot rod.” Skateboarding is hastily set up through the evocation of hot-rod culture as a form of juvenile delinquency, both dangerous and despicable (in the figure of Ed Roth, who provided graphics for skateboard decks as well as kustom kar designs, this parallel was very real). The perceived death wish of skateboarders is emphasized in one of the call-outs of the article—“It’s easier to get bloody than fancy”—and an accompanying photograph of a mangled foot. More akin to a warning against an infectious virus than a journalistic report, the article is littered with hospital statistics and other tales of injuries. One caption, referring to the mother of a skateboarder who decided to try it for herself, reads as follows:

*It reminded Mrs. Greer of a roller coaster and gave her “a very free kind of feeling, but if Peter had let go of me, I think I would have died.” She was luckier than a California woman who tried her son’s board and got going too fast. He landed on both elbows and now has one arm in a sling, the other in a cast.*

But what is it exactly about skateboarding that strikes such a nerve for its reporter, and presumably for the readers of Life magazine? As in surfing, the injuries, even according to this paranoid article, are sustained exclusively by those doing the skateboarding. Or as it was put by Bob Muller, a native Californian in a letter to the editor published three weeks later, “so what if we get a few broken bones, scraped knees

and lumpy heads.<sup>6</sup> They’re our bones, knees and heads.” Despite Muller’s rebuttal, by August 1965 skateboarding was banned from the streets and sidewalks of twenty U.S. cities.<sup>7</sup>

The disproportionate alarm caused by skateboarding in comparison to surfing has to do with the space in which it is practiced. Limited to water, surfing is always kept at bay. Because surfing is relegated to the beach and the water, which ultimately are spaces of leisure, surfing poses no threat to the limits of prescribed spatial use. Skateboarding, on the other hand, brings itself onto the land, and thus positions itself within the complex delineations of public and private space. Because the functionality of suburban spaces is premised on the clear definition of public and private space, skateboarding is seen as an irritant. By reconceptualizing the concrete as water, skateboarders threw sand into the lubricant necessary for the city’s and the suburbs’ smooth operation.

Marxist spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre asserts that “private space is distinct from, but always connected with, public space” and “in the best of circumstances, the outside space of the community is dominated, while the indoor space of family life is appropriated.”<sup>8</sup> Skateboarding may be said to use the already confused delimitation between public and private to its own advantage. It appropriates so-called public spaces that are in reality increasingly dominated by privatization. For those who are invested in—and profit from—the rigidly administered uses of space such as the strip mall, skateboarding is indeed a nuisance. It both creates and functions as “noise” in its interference in commerce. In their alternate use of the strip mall, for instance, a space which is ambiguously both open to the public and designed with a single, non-civic purpose in mind, skateboarders become

an unwanted presence precisely for their refusal to take part in consumption, and for obfuscating the architecturally articulated boundaries of permissible and prohibited use.

In the 1970s, skateboarders found an answer to their search for transitions from a horizontal to vertical plane. The ultimate concrete wave was in the absence of water—in swimming pools, drain pipes, ditches, and dried-up aqueducts. Rejoicing in the desiccation of the lifelines of L.A.,<sup>9</sup>—and pools, which would frequently be emptied as a result of the frequent fires in the Hollywood Hills and Santa Monica Mountains<sup>10</sup>— the practice of skateboarding took on a distinctly noir tinge, negatively criticizing and emphasizing the ecological instability of L.A.<sup>11</sup> The transgressiveness of the skateboarders’ gestures registered both symbolically and judicially, as trespassing was often necessary to access desirable sites. In disregarding the very concept of private property by entering backyards, skateboarders parodied the concept of indoor/outdoor living, a paradigmatically Californian lifestyle and architectural metaphor. Furthermore, skateboarders critiqued the ideological premise of suburban life—community living realized through increased privacy, seclusion, and exclusion—by literally bringing themselves from outside in.

As contemporary spatial theorist Iain Borden points out, in Lefebvrian terms, this mode of skateboarding remains in the realm of co-optation, rather than appropriation.<sup>12</sup> For Lefebvre, the difference between the two concepts is marked by temporality and power and is hence parallel to French sociologist and theorist Michel de Certeau’s distinction between “strategies” and “tactics.” De Certeau defines strategies as “the calculus of force relationships” that can be taken by “subject[s] of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution).”<sup>13</sup> Tactics, on the

other hand, are used by those who lack both institutionalized power and a proper place “where [tactics] can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances.”<sup>14</sup>

To illustrate the distinction between co-optation and appropriation, Lefebvre cites “Christianity’s co-optation of the Roman basilica,”<sup>15</sup> going on to state that for its co-optation, the space had to be consecrated. Thus co-optation requires power for its implementation and supposes a relative permanence of control. In Borden’s words, co-optation differs from appropriation in its lack of ephemerality.<sup>16</sup> Skateboarders were deprived of the means for administrating spaces; the occupation of spaces such as pools and pipes could always only be temporary. These spaces could only be appropriated until the law appeared. The limited effectiveness of the attempted co-optation by skateboarders can be seen, then, as a result of their deployment of strategic rather than tactical means. As de Certeau writes, “a strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper...The ‘proper’ is a victory of space over time.”<sup>17</sup>

However, by defining their practices in mere opposition to dominant spatial practices, pool skaters failed to fundamentally negotiate the structure which makes spatial domination possible. As a result, in many pools skateboarders attempted to rewrite spatiality in their own names through the application of graffiti—in effect replicating the desire for spatial mastery. The natural extension of this trajectory was the imagining and the production of skateparks, and backyard halfpipes, which offered themselves as utopian oases. Due to their large scale, these spaces were often separated from everyday life. Bones Brigade Video III: The Search for Animal Chin (1987) was then the largest scale skate video production to date. It is produced by then leading skateboard manufacturer Powell-Peralta and,

as all skateboard videos do, it serves as a promotional video of the professionals they sponsor. Ostensibly in search of a mythical figure named Animal Chin, the Bones Brigade’s search leads them to an enormous halfpipe named the Chin Ramp located in the middle of a barren desert. In its giant scale, minimalist/functionalist aesthetics, and location within a “rugged nature,”<sup>18</sup> the Chin Ramp closely resembles the modernist architectural aesthetic of “the machine in the garden”—or the desert, as is the case here.

Of course, such structures were necessarily un-urban, and more often than not privately owned, or built as a part of a film set, as is the case above. In their monumentality and singularly defined purpose, such purely functional structures managed to elide a connection to their spatial context, successfully sanitizing the sport of its appropriational nature. It was in these terms that skateboarding achieved an unprecedented mass popularity.

Later on, in the 1980s and 1990s, with its return to the streets, skateboarding was increasingly articulated in tactical terms. In its most recent and currently most popular incarnation, skateboarding happens in the downtown center. An exploration of this performance of the city offers insights into the production of “downtown” as social space by giving us an example of spatial dissent. While street skating is a global phenomenon, and certainly not limited to downtown L.A., the skateboarding industry remains centered in California, and—like Hollywood cinema—the visual ephemera produced by the industry, both in print and video, disseminate images of southern California and situates it as its paradigmatic landscape. Like potential actors, many aspiring professional skateboarders flock to California for a chance to be “discovered.” Likewise, many skateboarders (myself

included) visit seeming “non-places” that are nevertheless mythologized in skateboard videos, such as the convex curbs on Venice beach or the curb that wraps around a Safeway supermarket in San Francisco.

So what does streetstyle skateboarding offer in terms of understanding the city? First and foremost, it shows us that there are sidewalks. In *City of Quartz*, Mike Davis criticizes Marxist critic Frederic Jameson and architect Frank Gehry for their “giddy” postmodernist stance and for taking an aerial view in place of a pedestrian or street level perspective of the effects of downtown “revitalization” in L.A. In regard to Jameson’s famous account of the Bonaventure hotel, Davis writes:

*What is missing from Jameson’s [description]...is the savagery of [the Bonaventure’s] insertion into the surrounding city...to speak of its “popular” character is to miss the point of its systematic segregation from the great Hispanic-Asian city outside.*<sup>19</sup>

Gehry fairs even worse. Davis characterizes his portfolio as “a mercenary celebration of bourgeois-decadent minimalism.”<sup>20</sup> While Davis argues that Jameson and Gehry respectively ignore and produce the militarization of downtown, and consequently turn a blind eye to any cultural activity outside of finance and commerce in the downtown area, his own recourse to a “thriving Latino culture”<sup>21</sup> in this respect remains largely amorphous and parenthetical. Despite his intention—that is presumably for a proletarian revolution of L.A.—he leaves little room for any counter-hegemonic articulation.

Davis suggests that the fortress architecture of downtown L.A. is a result of the peripheralization of industry and the

centralization of finance capital, an effect of class polarization resulting from the development of capitalism. I want to suggest that offering such conclusions without any alternatives has the effect of gridlocking any possible counter-cultural activity. It is in lieu of such an impression that I want to posit the activity of streetstyle skateboarding.

It is significant that skateboarders in many downtowns flock specifically to spaces that are modeled after Rockefeller Center. Of these spaces, Davis writes, quoting Italian Marxist architectural critic Manfredo Tafuri: “the final development for the plan was ‘a contained and rational concentration, an oasis of order—a closed and circumscribed intervention.’”<sup>22</sup> Davis situates the Rockefeller Center model as the genealogical precursor to the Bonaventure hotel. As such, he sees it as giving rise to a new architectural ideology which “redefined [genuine public spaces] as planning problems to be eliminated or privatized.”<sup>23</sup> Yet for skateboarders, these apparently hostile spaces which resist unsolicited occupation are “the places to be.” It may be useful to consider the viewpoint of Jesse Neuhaus, a former professional skateboarder, on these structures: “the corporate types see their structures as powerful and strong...I see them as something I can enjoy, something I can manipulate to my own advantage.”<sup>24</sup>

More specifically, streetstyle skateboarding privileges non-places of architectural punctuation such as landscaping, planters, curb cuts, and parking lots. In doing so, this practice engages in poetic misuses of non-places. These non-places also constitute “a series of opportunity constraints,” effected by architectural boundaries, or “vertical planes preventing horizontal movement across the city.”<sup>25</sup> Boundaries such as walls, ledges, barriers, and handrails are also the foundational elements of downtown architecture. As French critic Michel

de Certeau suggests about these borders:

Everything refers in fact to this differentiation which makes possible the isolation and interplay of distinct spaces. From the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority to the distinctions that localize objects, from the home (constituted on the basis of a wall) to the journey (constituted on a the basis of a geographical “elsewhere” or a cosmological “beyond”), from the functioning of an urban network to that of rural landscape, there is no spatiality that is not organized by the determination of frontiers. <sup>26</sup>

At the same time that these elements define the space that they surround, their infrastructural role remains largely ignored. It is through the presumed architectural insignificance of these boundaries that an illusion of freedom and mobility are expressed to the inhabitants of city space.

In the city, street skaters highlight the existence of boundaries, which are designed to be disregarded, by grinding them down, and transgressing them at will. Street skating irrevocably brings these architectural boundaries into visibility, not only calling attention to them by skateboarding on them, but also by encouraging the owners of these private or municipal boundaries to respond by installing architectural devices.<sup>27</sup> These devices are equivalent to the third armrest on “bumproof” benches and sprinklers installed in parks to prohibit potential sleepers,<sup>28</sup> except for the additional fact that they serve no function whatsoever other than that of prohibition. Like paint used to cover up graffiti that fails to match the original color of the wall, these contraptions suggest a level of absurdity by putting little walls on top of bigger walls, in the end simply calling explicit attention to a helpless desire for control. In this way, street skating

exposes the contradictory and schizophrenic nature of the way in which public and private spaces of downtowns are articulated.

The increasing deployment of such prohibitive structures in downtown areas, and a concurrent resurgence of legislative actions to ban skateboarding from streets and plazas—and to restrict its practice to public skateboard parks, “where the action is radical but lacks the inspiration of a knock-down, drag-out backyard pool session or a skate cruise down the boulevard with the crew”—has incited a proliferation of fiery responses.<sup>29</sup> Contemporary skateboard publications are filled with rhetoric urging skateboarders to stay in the streets and to “keep it real.” In a section of a recent issue of Thrasher magazine that serves as a forum for reader-submitted photos, one caption reads as follows: “Benches, knobs...they threw every anti-skate device in existence at Hubba. Guess what? IT’S STILL A SKATESPOT, FUCKERS!” At the bottom of the same photograph is a solicitation from “Skatespot Liberation Army” to “send in flicks of you using and abusing any and all skate-proof spots.”<sup>30</sup> Even more explicitly, one skateboard manufacturer, Real Skateboards, ran an advertisement that doubles as a call to action:

Now that everyone loves skateboarding and it’s on every TV and cities are building parks everywhere it makes it even harder to skate in any downtown. The fake fuckers want skateboarding on their own terms, in their designated areas. Any street, anywhere is still off limits. Not anymore. The war is not over—Don’t be seen but leave your mark.<sup>31</sup> While much of the language used in these responses takes on a militaristic—and hence strategic—tone, skateboarders lack the means to realize strategic action. All of the actions called for remain on the level of tactical subversion. In de

Certeauian terms, the rhetoric urges skateboarders to “make do” with the available resources.

Therefore, skateboarding offers us a way in which the increasingly geometric space of the city can be negotiated so as to overlay “a poetic reading,” which resists “proper” use and enacts resistance within the context of an architectural administration of power.<sup>32</sup> Through this imposition, what were formerly non-places are transformed into social spaces. Henri Lefebvre defines the latter as “both a field of action (offering its extension to the deployment of projects and practical intentions) and a basis of action (a set of places whence energies derive and whither energies are directed).”<sup>33</sup> By dialectically reading architecturally prohibitive elements as both fields and bases of action, and inserting an element of play into the architectural language of power, skateboarding perverts the humorlessly rigid delineations regulated by the grid of downtown.

I do not intend to fashion skateboarding as any sort of “way out,” or to imbue it with explicitly political radicalism. Nevertheless, skateboarding does offer a narrative through which we can imagine an appropriation of the structures of control, and move toward what Lefebvre has called “the true space of pleasure, which would be an appropriated space par excellence, [which] does not yet exist.”

34 •

- Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (Berkeley: University of California, 1971) 111.
- Dr. David Starr Jordan quoted in Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1979) 110.
- The Beach Boys, of course, did not surf, but this was a

minor qualification of their image that did not hinder their musical success.

- See *Sunshine and Noir: Art in L.A., 1960-1997* (Humblebaek, Denmark: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1997).
- Skateboards started to be produced commercially around 1959, according to Michael Brooke. See *Concrete Wave: The History of Skateboarding* (Toronto, Canada: Warwick, 1999).
- "Skateboard Mania—and Menace," *Life* 4 June, 1965.
- Brooke, 24.
- Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991) 166.
- Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1979) 183. McWilliams writes: "Water is the life-blood of Southern California."
- Iain Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body* (New York: Berg, 2001) 47.
- For an apocalyptic account of the ecological instability of Los Angeles, see Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear* (New York: Metropolitan, 1998).
- Borden, 55.
- Michel de Certeau, introduction, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984) xix.
- Ibid.
- Lefebvre, 369.
- Borden, 47.
- de Certeau, xix.
- Thomas S. Hines, "Machines in the Garden: Notes Toward a History of Modern Los Angeles Architecture, 1900-1990," *Sex, Death, and God in L.A.*, ed. David Reid (Berkeley: University of California, 1994) 287.
- Mike Davis, "Urban Renaissance and the Spirit of

Postmodernism," *Postmodernism and its Discontents: Theories, Practices*, ed. E. Ann Kaplan (New York: Verso, 1988) 86.

- Davis, *City of Quartz* (New York, Vintage, 1992) 236.
  - Davis, *City of Quartz* 231.
  - Davis, "Urban Renaissance," 84.
  - Davis, "Urban Renaissance," 85.
  - Leah Garchik, "The Urban Landscape," reprinted from *San Francisco Chronicle* (1994) at <http://web.cps.msu.edu/~dunhamda/dw/urban.html>.
  - Iain Borden, "Boundaries," *City A-Z*, ed. Steve Pile & Nigel Thrift (New York: Routledge, 2000) 21.
  - de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984) 123.
  - For examples, see "Ravensforge Skateboard Solutions": <http://www.ravensforge.com/products.htm>.
  - Davis, *City of Quartz* 233.
  - Kevin Thatcher, "Grab that Board!" from the first issue of *Thrasher*, reprinted at <http://web.cps.msu.edu/~dunhamda/dw/grab.html>.
  - "Photograffiti," *Thrasher* Nov. 2001: 175.
  - *Thrasher*, 62.
  - de Certeau, 105.
  - Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991) 191.
  - Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991) 167.
- Taro Nettleton is a Ph.D. student in the Visual and Cultural Studies program at the University of Rochester. In 2002, he curated *Just Like Music: Sound in the MCA Artists' Book Collection*, an exhibition held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. He has been skateboarding since 1985.

# Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body

by Iain Borden



Skateboarding is perhaps an unusual object of study for a study in architectural history. But it is precisely its marginal position which enables skateboarding to function historically as a critical exterior to architecture. As such, skateboarding helps to rethink architecture's manifold possibilities.

To give some indication of why this might be the case, consider that skateboarding is local, being fundamentally concerned with the micro-spaces of streets, yet is also a globally dispersed and proliferous practice, with tens of millions of practitioners worldwide. It addresses the physical architecture of the modern city, yet responds not with another object but with dynamic presence. It says almost nothing as codified statements, yet presents an extraordinary range of implicit enunciations and meanings. It produces space, but also time and the self.

Skateboarding is constantly repressed and legislated against, but counters not through negative destruction but through creativity and production of desires. It has a history, but is unconscious of that history, preferring the immediacy of the present and coming future. It requires a tool (the skateboard), but absorbs that tool into the body. It involves great effort, but produces no commodity ready for exchange. It is highly visual, but refutes the reduction of activity solely to the spectacle of the image. It began in the suburbs, but has come downtown to the core of urban conflicts. It is seen as a child's play activity, but for many practitioners involves nothing less than a complete and alternative way of life. It is, therefore, architecture, not as a thing, but as a production of space, time and social being.

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**OLAFUR ELIASSON**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
Dimensions



**PETER ZIMMERMAN**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
Dimensions



# Juan Aizpitarre

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# Sadow Birk

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**THADDEUS STRODE**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
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**ALBERT OEHLER**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
Dimensions



**JOSH SMITH**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
Dimensions



**KATHARINA GROSSE**

*Title of Work*  
Medium used  
Dimensions



# Jenene Nagy

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## **before TIDAL**

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latex, Tyvek  
60" x 108" x 204"  
2010



## Paul Rusconi

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### Tony Alva

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Digital screen inks on plexiglas with  
C-print and nail polish mounted to  
Sinatra in artist's frame  
145" x 97"  
2010

# Excerpts from “Distinction of risk: Urban skateboarding, street habitus, and the construction of hierarchical gender relations”

by B. Beal, 2009

## Excerpt 1

Street skateboarders explicitly enact an urban identity that invokes freedom, nonconformity and engagement with risk. Indeed, the street skateboarding social field has been defined as ‘dangerous, poetic, authentic, rebellious’ (Rose and Strike 2004, p. 25). The notion that skaters regularly seek out and use spaces which are typically off-limits is integrally linked with the idealisation of freedom; at the same time, there is a significant valorisation of risk that is linked with the use of typically unsupervised, dangerous and off-limit spaces. Indeed, Walk (2006) describes skateboarding as a masculine-oriented culture that involves voluntary ‘self-mutilation’ and ‘risk taking in which the definitive measure of social life made vital is the life routinely and systematically nearly ended’ (pp. 2–3).

“Distinction of risk: Urban skateboarding, street habitus, and the construction of hierarchical gender relations.” Atencio, M., Beal, B. & Wilson, C. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*. Reproduced with permission of ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, CA.

## Excerpt 2

Women are increasingly becoming involved in skateboarding and find significant value in the street version of this activity. However, street skateboarding is a particularly problematic endeavour for women as this activity is typically structured by male power. Despite the promise of all-women skate events, when women do skate and gain capital in this context, it is often conditional to them being isolated from the ‘street’ in a mostly ramp-oriented format. In the ‘street’, [where] men are still considered purveyors of risk and are thus able to maintain their status as holders of ‘insider’ or authentic status, women exist in a more peripheral women-only social field that has limited influence on changing power relations in street skateboarding more broadly. Challenges to masculine domination can only take place through the erosion of the symbolic order through which male-associated qualities of the body remain ascendant. Power that is linked with the legitimation of the masculine habitus can only be shifted when existing practices and perceptions are simultaneously disrupted; only then will the symbolic capital that is integrally associated with masculinity come to be seen as feminine as well.

Urban skateboarding, street habitus, and the construction of hierarchical gender relations.” Atencio, M., Beal, B. & Wilson, C. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*. Reproduced with permission of ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, CA.



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Handwritten graffiti on a brick wall, including the word "USED" and other illegible markings.

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