

I am an enthusiast I am a jock, I am a creator, I am a destroy I am a punk, I am a gangster I live off of adrenaline and the thrill of life I strive to learn something new everyday with my ultimate goal: to become the best. My friends are closer to me than my own flesh and blood; they are my family and the streets are my home; while the law enforcers are my parents, telling me what I cannot do and where I cannot go.

I am a skateboarder and this is my life. You either have to, give it your all, or nothing at all. I skate everyday of my life-it is my biggest passion; very little comes before skating. The problem with being a skater is the stereotypes; everyone assumes that we are all "law breaking punks that like to get drunk and have no respect for authority". This stereotype may be true in some cases, but it is ignorant to assume that every skater lives his or her life this way.

I am not the stereotype! I have spent the last two years of my life trying to develop my skating skills, spending endless hours on the street and inside skate parks to improve my technique. I spend more time outside on my skateboard than I do in my own home. I enjoy nothing more than the pure thrill of learning a new trick or landing a trick on the first try. Sometimes I feel like I am in my own zone, as if nothing can affect me-it is just the board and me; we are one in the same. Everyday as I sit in school, I count the seconds as they go by, thinking of every new trick I can try when I am finally able to escape this prison.

I think my eldest brother might be the one to blame for my addiction because when I was younger I always remember him skating and talking about skating I remember when he gave me my first real complete skateboard. I say real skateboard because the complete skateboards they sell at Wal-Mart, Toys r 'Us, and Big Five are a

disgrace to skateboarding; they are made with the worst materials and are probably made by someone in a different country that has no idea what skateboarding is.

Skateboarding has affected my life so much, it has even changed the way I view the world as I walk down the street. I imagine myself doing a board slide down that perfectly angled handrail, or doing a trick down that 7-stair. Sometimes, I even feel as if people are obstacles in my way my for example my mother when she attempts to ground me from skateboarding.

I feel as if my entire life completely revolves around skateboarding and sometimes I wonder if it is healthy to be so obsessed with one thing. Sometimes I try and take breaks from skating, but in the end being away from skating just makes me want to skate a little bit more. I see many different skaters everywhere I go, and although they may look different from me, I know they feel the same passion I do. Although there may be some aspects of skating that completely fall on the individual, such as your primary skills as a skater, skaters are a united community. The skate park is our meeting place, and respect is determined by your ability. When you enter the skate park you have to leave the rest of your life behind. It's all about how you skate, on that day, in that moment.

This is the life I have chosen to live and I love it. In closing, I thank my brother for introducing me to this life changing sport. I modeled my style after him I took the things he was good at and learned them adding them to my own skills. People may come and go, but skateboarding stays eternally, burning inside of me. This is my legacy, this is my life, and this is what I believe.