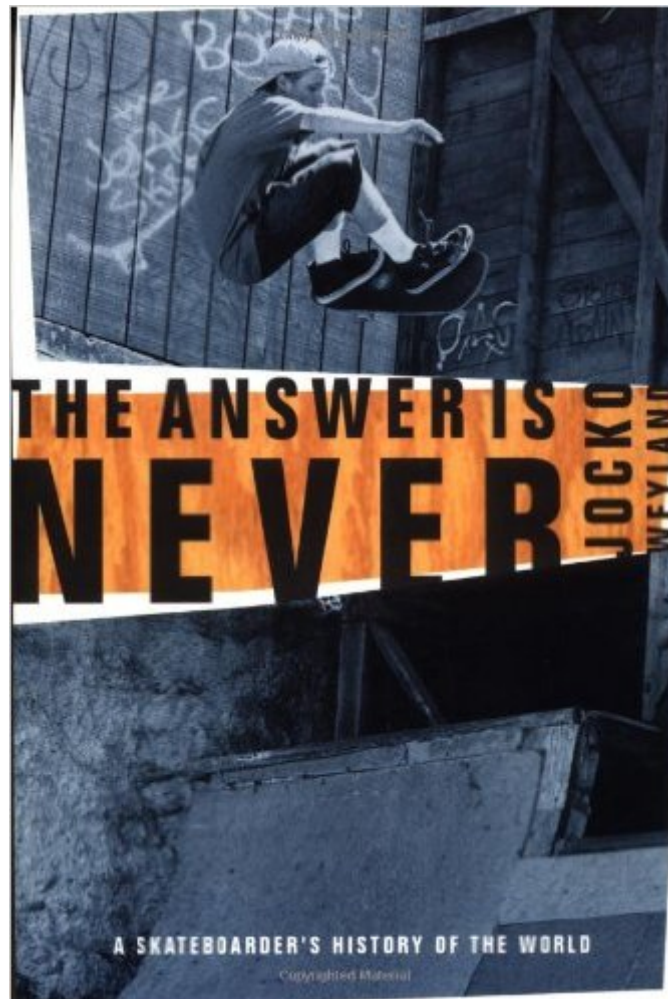


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The Answer Is Never: A Skateboarder's History Of The World



Synopsis

From the hard-riden half-pipe of a suburban driveway to teens doing boardslides down stairway handrails in Rio de Janeiro, from the bright-light glare of ESPN's X-Games to the groundbreaking street-skating videos of Spike Jonze, skateboarding has taken the world by storm -- and if you can't deal with that, get out of the way. In *The Answer Is Never*, skating journalist Jocko Weyland tells the rambunctious story of a rebellious sport that began as a wintertime surfing substitute on the streets of Southern California beach towns more than forty years ago and has evolved over the decades to become a fixture of urban youth culture around the world. Merging the historical development of the sport with passages about his own skating adventures in such wide-ranging places as Hawaii, Germany, and Cameroon, Weyland gives a fully realized portrait of a subculture whose love of free-flowing creativity and a distinctive antiauthoritarian worldview has inspired major trends in fashion, music, art, and film. Along the way, Weyland interweaves the stories of skating pioneers like Gregg Weaver and the Dogtown Z-Boys and living legends like Steve Caballero and Tony Hawk. He also charts the course of innovations in deck, truck, and wheel design to show how the changing boards changed the sport itself, enabling new tricks as skaters moved from the freestyle techniques that dominated the early days to the extreme street-skating style of today. Vivid and vibrant, *The Answer Is Never* is a fascinating book as radical and unique as the sport it chronicles.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great book-first -for skaters it offers the first real unglorified view of a skaters life (in all of its glory)second -for everybody else it offers a view of life intertwined with music and skating

subcultures that may be the only real "history" of the actual experience. Not so much "I was there. . . I was cool" stuff but the real view that the most people who did this stuff had- which makes it that much more powerful and inspirational. This book is also an important record of pre-MTV life when kids had to find things themselves and subcultures were different from niche markets. Interesting, smart, fun to read. . . all around an honest and important book.

Growing up in the 80s I was surrounded by skateboarding, whether it be in the form of my Mom's friend's daughter showing me how to (attempt to) ride down the street at age 10, the kids skating in the "hip town" of Hyannis, MA (which was a "city" to someone from The Cape), watching my neighbors skate and build their own ramps, watching the early skate videos, or ogling through Transworld Skate or Thrasher and wishing I'd had enough coordination to actually be able to learn what I was seeing. I found this book at the public library and thought it might be an interesting read, but I had no idea what I was in for. Granted, Weyland's writing can be very subjective and he tends to "go off" about what skating has become (as many people who have been skating their entire life can), but what he wrote isn't just his complaints about skating and the industry. There's a lot of information about the history of skating (which a lot of people who claim to skate might not have any ideas about), and also stories about what skating was like before The Circus of what is now began. What he's written gives the person who doesn't understand skating the ability to have some inkling of what it's like, and to understand that "skating" isn't just what they see, but it's a culture, a lifestyle, a thought pattern, a philosophical journey, and can even be a family. One truly interesting part of the book (for me, being a 28 year-old college professor) is Weyland's comments and thoughts about going from being "in the know" to being considered "old." I would definitely suggest this book to anyone who is interested in learning more about the history of the sport and the genesis of what they see before them today.

I have a review coming out of this book in my magazine *Concrete Wave*. I don't want to steal too much from that review, but suffice to say that this book is a work of great significance. I can only hope that the entire skate community (from EVERY generation) gets a chance to read this book. Well written, well researched and best of all, written by someone who truly knows skateboarding. HIGHLY, highly, recommended.

I have just finished the book after an extended sitting (couldn't put it down) and found it to be completely absorbing. I also have skateboarded for 25 years and this book came as close as

anything I have ever read to summing up how a piece of wood attached to 4 wheels can completely inform and influence your life, the choices you make, the friends you choose and the way you look at every aspect of the world around you. If you are just getting on board for the first time, or haven't stepped off in 25 years or more, read this book!

Weyland chronicles the history of the sport from its ancestry in Hawaiian surfing through its recent emergence as a mass-marketed ESPN drawing card. While carefully charting this history, he intersperses lengthy (though riveting) tales from his own experiences growing up as a skater. These tales, which are indicative of how the skating milieu of the time shaped him, are a valuable time capsule to which many readers will relate. He manages to do all of this very artfully so that what seems to be a bi-polar structure is nearly seamless. Few books measure up to the narrative and literary standards I expect from authors--but this one far surpasses them (a pleasant surprise). Novice skaters and parents who wish to understand skating culture should read this book and also Tony Hawk's Operation: Skateboarder. Both are fast reads (despite their 300+ pagecounts) and demonstrate two contrasting aspects of the sport and the corresponding worldviews engendered therein. Really, it's so good if Weyland waxes poetic on ice fishing I'd have to check it out. Please note that this book is a lot more fun to read than my dull review.

Indeed there is something to be said for reaching out with the internet. Jocko has, since my previous review, made good with a payment for the photo usage in this book, and has been added to my personal list, as another "Cadillac of Dudes".-M.Fo

being a 32 year old skateboard enthusiast (going on 18 years), i could feel myself re-living my past. he brings back the essence of what skateboarding is, was, and "will be" all about. i've had the wonderful opportunity to meet, and skate with this great author, and he truly does have a passion. the book is a part of his energy, and an element of the soul of skateboarding. i would urge anybody interested in skateboarding, or what skateboarding is about, to buy it. A+ jocko!

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