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The best skateboard books of all time

JULY 6, 2020 | SKATEBOARDING



Skateboard literature is key to understanding the role of the streets in the development of a unique, transgenerational urban subculture.

Unlike surfing, its older brother, the act of skateboarding has already been considered a crime.

Any skater will become a better performer if he or she learns more about the sport's roots.

SurferToday curated a shortlist of books that enable readers to have a 360-degree vision of skateboarding as an outdoor activity with a strong and vibrant culture and set of values.

These are the publications any skater should own.

They not only detail the evolution of skateboarding through time, but they also reveal how design and visually appealing graphics are an integral part of the sport's DNA.

A Secret History of the Ollie



**A SECRET
HISTORY OF THE**

OLIE

VOL 1: THE 1970s

CRAIG B. SNYDER

Written by skateboard historian Craig B. Snyder, "A Secret History of the Ollie - Vol 1: The 1970s" is the most important book in the history of the four-wheel sport.

The 912-page book focuses on the decade that changed skateboarding forever - the 1970s - and dissects the rise of an outdoor activity, not only as an urban sports phenomenon, but also as lifestyle, culture, and "great equalizer between the sexes."

With over 1,200 historical photos, illustrations, and ads, the publication guides the reader through all the vectors and variables that led to the **invention of the ollie**

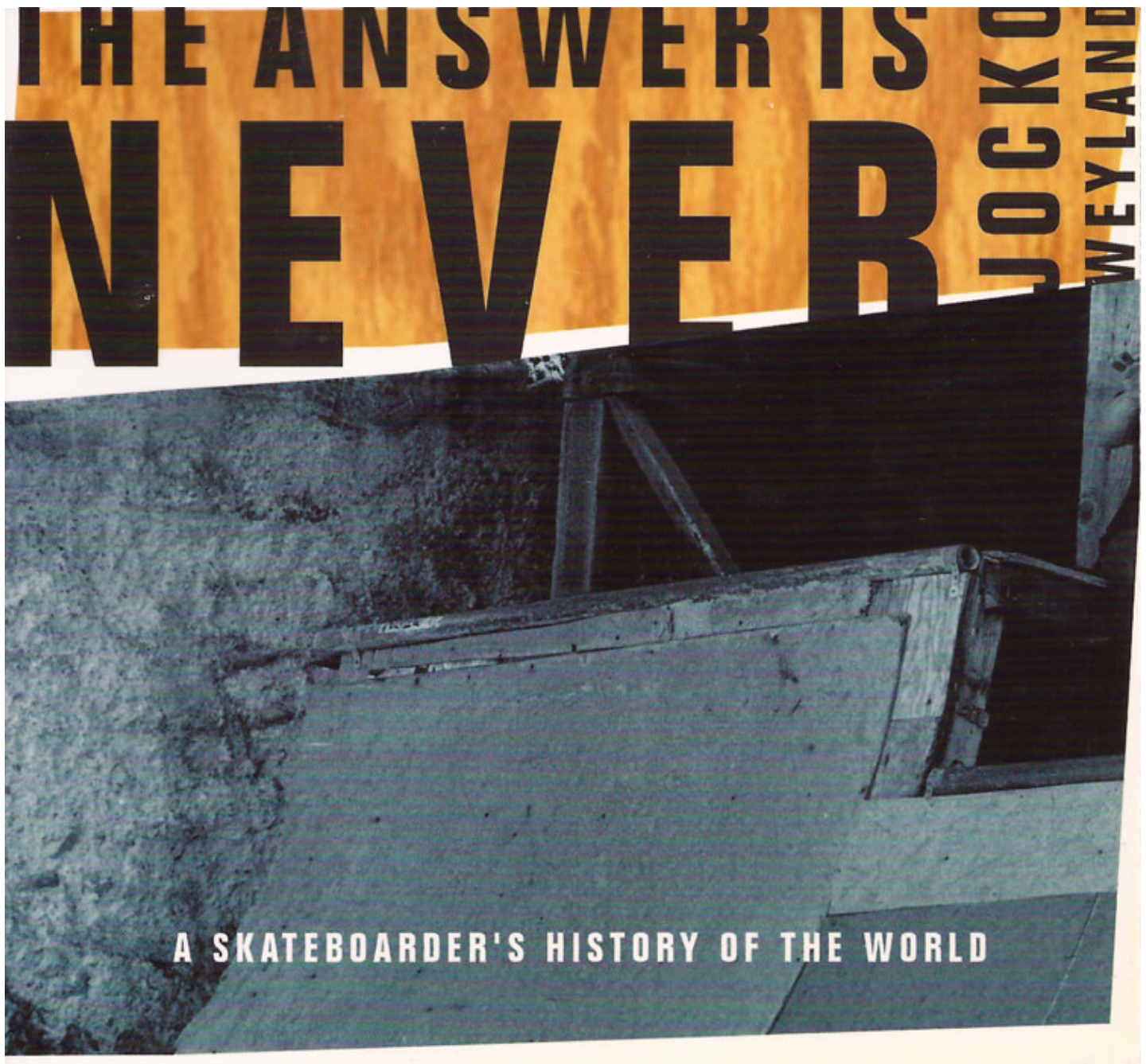
(<https://www.surfertoday.com/skateboarding/ollie-the-trick-that-revolutionized-skateboarding>), skateboarding's ultimate trick.

"A Secret History of the Ollie

(https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1930287003/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=1930287003&linkId=78cb63ce85d02e130b15fe482d5f) and its 75 chapters is more than a book about skateboarders. It's a sociological study about street culture, technology, and human behavior.

The Answer Is Never





"**The Answer is Never** (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0802139450/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=0802139450&linkId=5854b1d1d8f2d67eb871fe444f87; is a fascinating, personal view on the evolution of the skateboard intertwined with the larger narrative of the sport's objective history.

Born in Helsinki, Finland, Jocko Weyland is an American artist, skater, and writer interested in adding a "biased, prejudicial, and discriminating" analysis of the sport he fell in love with somewhere in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.

The author believes skating is about getting towed behind cars, riding off of picnic tables, and ollieing onto them.

The book mirrors that insubordinate, nonconformist, and resistant DNA that makes skateboarding such a fine example of what an urban sport should look like these days.

DogTown - The Legend of the Z-Boys

DOG TOWN - THE LEGEND OF THE Z-BOYS



C.R. STECYK III

GLEN E. FRIEDMAN

Glen E. Friedman is one of the most relevant photographers of his generation.

By the time skateboarding had its first boom, the North Carolina born artist was still learning to walk.

But Friedman ended up getting in contact with the "most influential youth movement of the late 20th century" - the DogTown skateboarders.

Inspired by the articles written by C. R. Stecyk III, the young Friedman started shooting his first pictures and sending them to skate magazines.

"DogTown - The Legend of the Z-Boys

(https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1617756997/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-

20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=1617756997&linkId=eb86284a9f0831d92fee0eff36911

is a stunning book that blends historic words and reports with a photo archive that has a golden shelf in the annals of skateboarding.

Stickerbomb Skateboard: 150 Classic Skateboard Stickers

150 CLASSIC SKATEBOARD STICKERS

PEELABLE STICKERS FROM GIRL, SANTA CRUZ, REAL, ALIEN WORKSHOP AND TOY MACHINE



Brands and logos are part of skateboarders' history since day. As a highly visual sport, graphics and colors cannot be detached from the sport's essence.

"150 Classic Skateboard Stickers

(https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1780674120/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=1780674120&linkId=8523161b76e38d6dbf5963ec8c16) features a selection of classic sticker designs from five key skateboard brands: Santa Cruz, Girl, Real, Alien Workshop, and Toy Machine.

These iconic brands created an archive of highly recognizable logos and designs that are now part of the urban art scene.

Enjoy a collection of 150 colorful, crazy, and fun stickers featuring legendary artwork and exciting illustrations.

Michael Brooke rode his first skateboard in the summer of 1975. Twenty-five years later, he wrote one of the first books on the **history of skateboarding** (<https://www.surfertoday.com/skateboarding/the-timeline-of-skateboarding-history>).

"**The Concrete Wave** (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1894020545/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=1894020545&linkId=2cd0a09fc396c0dc1846d9f73b66) is a must-have book on the impact of sidewalk surfing in music, fashion, the internet, and the architecture of our urban communities.

Brooke divides his work into five main chronological chapters - Prehistory, the first wave (1959-1965), the second wave (1973-1980), the third wave (1983-1991), and the fourth wave (1993-2000s).

All 197 pages balance words, facts, stars, and iconic photos perfectly. And it will certainly give the reader an insightful panoramic view of the evolution of skating in its first and decisive five decades.

Locals Only: California Skateboarding 1975-1978



locals only

California Skateboarding 1975-1978
Photographs by Hugh Holland

AMMO

Hugh Holland only tried skateboarding once. He fell off and didn't try again because he was afraid to break his leg.

Nevertheless, he chose photography as his grand passion and started shooting young skateboarders on the streets of Hollywood in the mid-1970s.

His first equipment included a Praktica 35mm SLR camera and fish-eye lenses.

The initial results impressed the riders' and Holland ended up meeting and shooting the most accomplished skateboarders of the 20th century.

"Locals Only (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/193442983X/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=193442983X&linkId=ac20878af18f7af6444bafbaff988); is the perfect portrait of what it was like to be a sidewalk surfer in California during the sport's first golden era.

The Skateboard Art of Jim Phillips

SKATE BOARD ART of JIM PHILLIPS



A Schiffer Book

"The Skateboard Art of Jim Phillips

(https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764328077/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=0764328077&linkId=ae81bf75b920696271fe56dc8d72) is a highly visual journey through the evolution of boards and skate design.

Phillips is a well-known graphic artist responsible for several famous and award-winning rock, surf and skateboard posters.

In the mid-1970s, he was art director for Santa Cruz Skateboards, where he developed hundreds of skate decks, shirts, stickers, and ads.

This retrospective book features hundreds of his most iconic templates, logos, and marketing campaigns, cartoons, and comics.

California Concrete: A Landscape of Skateparks

CALIFORNIA CONCRETE

A LANDSCAPE OF SKATEPARKS

AMIR ZAKI

Essays by
TONY HAWK
PETER ZELLNER

MERRELL

"California Concrete (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1858946786/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=1858946786&linkId=3e9a41c411eb87d3faf8601e0e70)

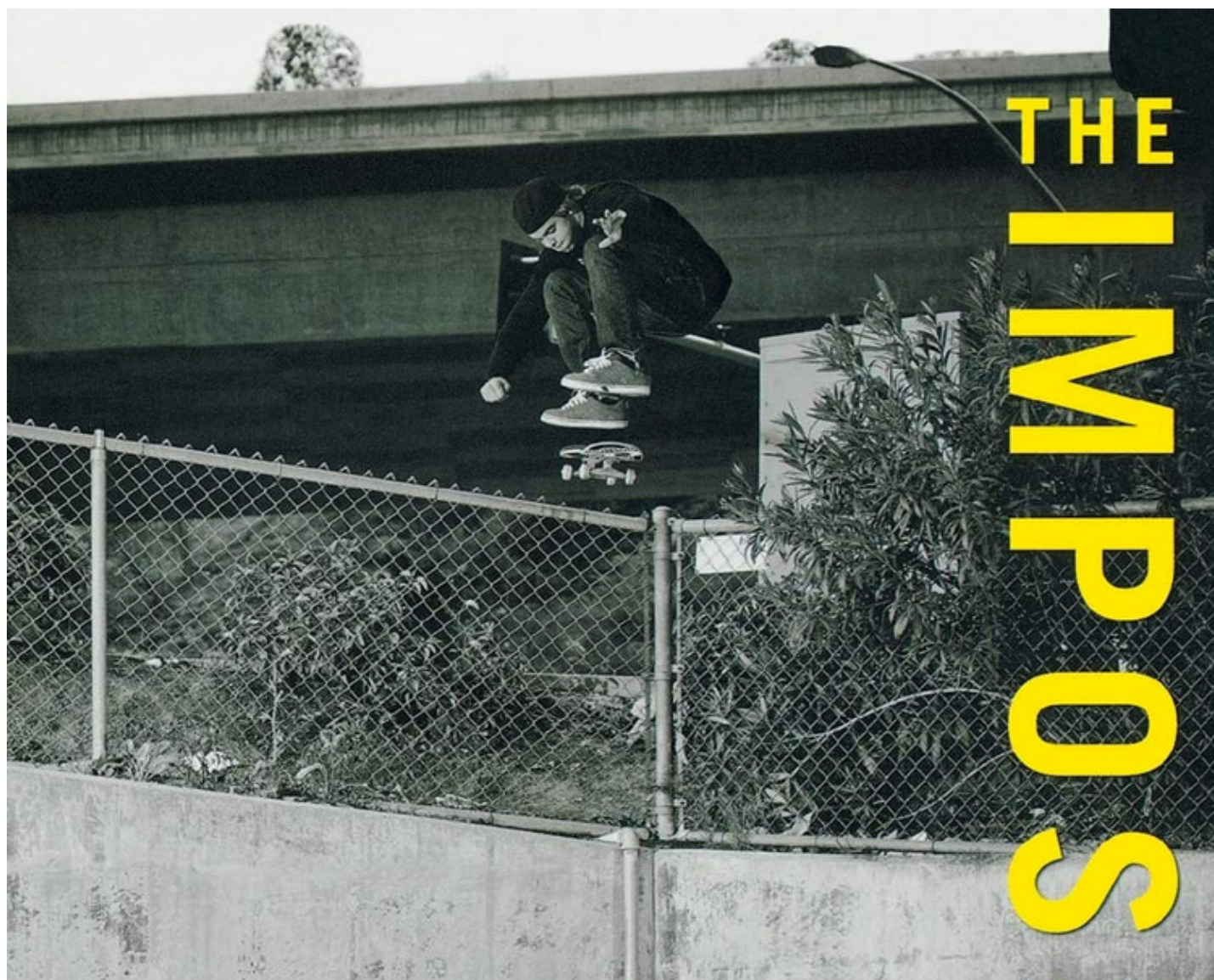
is a breathtaking look into the creative the brutalist architecture of skateparks, its more of less common shapes, forms, and curves.

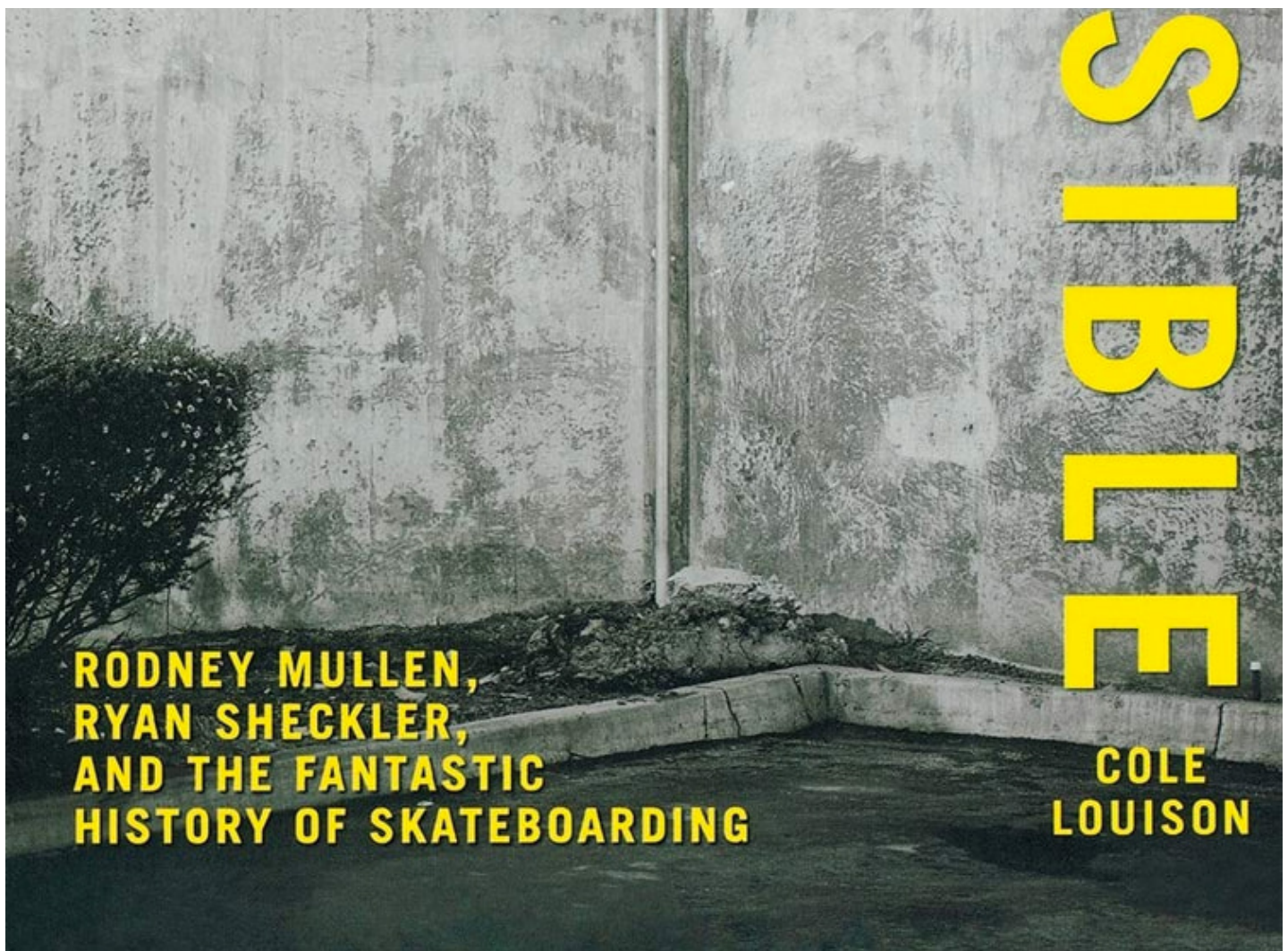
The exquisite analysis of skateboarders' ultimate playground helps us understand how concrete landscapes and design can contribute to creating a unique sports environment that helped shape American cities.

It's an ode to the extremely urban, concave, and convex world of skaters in their quest to perfecting their skills and style.

Amir Zaki uses photography and essays from Tony Haw and Peter Zellner to give us an alternative perspective of how skateparks became part of the Southern California geosocial paradigm.

The Impossible





Written by Cole Louison, "The Impossible" is a concise history of skateboarding spanning around five decades (1960-2010).

The 304-page book leads the reader on a journey through innovation, rebellion, and technicality, as the sport evolved from a Southern California pastime to a multimillion-dollar global industry.

The author tells us everything we should know about sidewalk surfing and its actor through the lives and careers of "skateboarding's Yoda" - Rodney Mullen - and one of the sport's first pro athlete - Ryan Sheckler.

"The Impossible" ([https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0762770260/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0762770260/ref=as_li_qf_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=skateboard-books-20&creative=9325&linkCode=as2&creativeASIN=0762770260&linkId=50aec36ca30885c1450300cd8eba)

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is not a 100 percent narrative of facts. There are personal opinions and informal observations, but that doesn't necessarily take the merit out of this work.

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[The greatest skateboarding quotes of all time \(/skateboarding/the-greatest-skateboarding-quotes-of-all-time\)](#)

Tony Hawk once said that "skateboarding is an art form, a lifestyle, and a sport." Maybe it's even more than that. Perhaps it already is a current of thought.

[Skateboarder Gui Khury lands first-ever 1080 on a vert ramp \(/skateboarding/skateboarder-gui-khury-lands-first-ever-1080-in-a-vert-ramp\)](#)

Gui Khury has become the first-ever skateboarder to land a 1080 on a vert ramp.

[The timeline of skateboarding history \(/skateboarding/the-timeline-of-skateboarding-history\)](#)

The history of skateboarding dates back to the 17th-century when roller skates were created as a summer alternative to ice skating.

[The glossary of skateboarding terms and slang \(/skateboarding/the-glossary-of-skateboarding-terms-and-slang\)](#)

The world of skateboarding has its own culture and vocabulary. Explore our comprehensive glossary of skating terms and expressions.

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