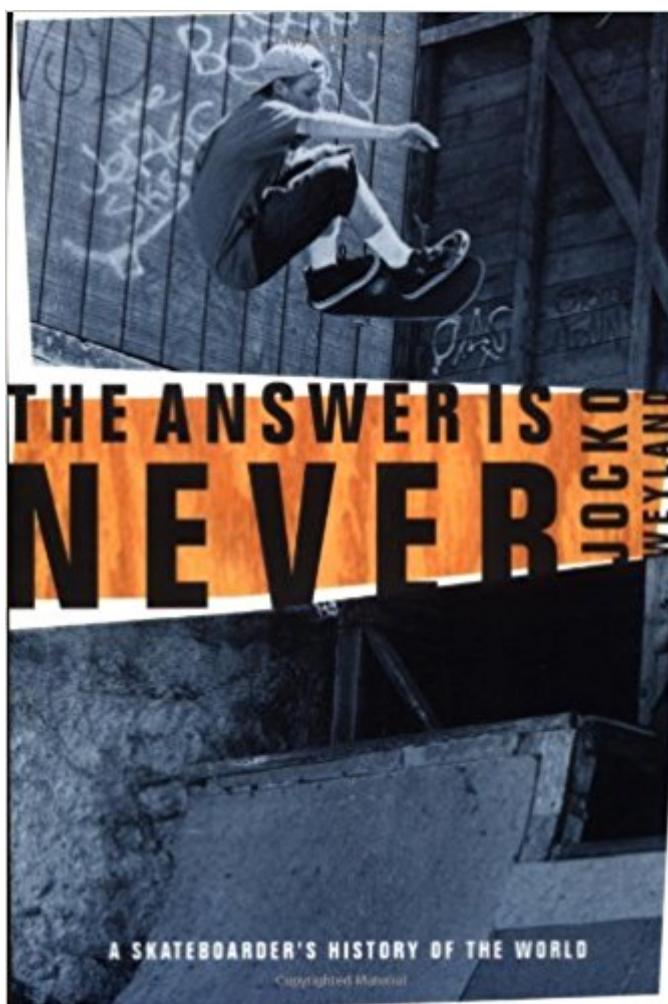


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# The Answer Is Never: A Skateboarder's History Of The World



## Synopsis

From the hard-ridden 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

At the beginning of this slim history of skateboarding, the author makes it clear that his version will be biased, prejudiced and discriminating. Weyland has been hooked on skateboarding for more

than 20 years (he is 33 years old), making objectivity all but impossible. Instead, Weyland has written what amounts to a love letter to skateboarding and its culture. He cobbles old articles and reportage from skating magazines like *Skateboarder* and *Thrasher* into a breezy narrative of the sport from its birth in 1960s California as a way for surfers to pass the time when the waves were flat to the hugely popular sport of today, regularly featured on ESPN. Along the way readers meet legends like the Dogtown Z-Boys (skating pioneers who were recently the subject of a documentary film), Steve Caballero and Tony Hawk. But the real strength of this book comes from the personal experiences he skillfully drops in the mix. He does a great job explaining how, growing up as an alienated kid, skating offered him an alternative to institutionalized jock mentality and its attendant boorishness. Through his vivid remembrances, he offers a glimpse into the rebellious skating culture in the 1980s when it was still far underground. And while Weyland lapses a bit into sentimentality over today's commercialization of the sport, he always returns to its true spirit. As he writes, It's slamming onto cement and getting purple hip contusions that stick to your pants for weeks, riding on rain-soaked sidewalks and arguing with old ladies and running from cops. This is a rallying cry to true skate punks everywhere. (Sept.) Forecast: Excerpts from the book will appear in skateboarding magazine *Thrasher* (circulation of 500,000), which should drive sales. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This chronicle, by a seasoned practitioner, of the halting but persistent ascent of skateboarding is sharp and winning, depicting from the inside the evolution of a subculture that has retained its stylistic distinctiveness even as it has spawned ESPN shows and tacky merchandising franchises. Unfortunately, Weyland spends too much time fretting that skaters have gone soft, and lamenting the decay of the anti-authoritarianism that once animated the sport. But his picture of the real world in which skaters live belies his warmed-over Frankfurt School critique, and he is at his best when he writes about what skating gave him as a kid—what it's like to awaken to a sense of possibility, and to realize that what you've grown up with is not what you're stuck with. Copyright © 2005 The New Yorker --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I purchased this as a gift for my nephew who is a dyed in the wool skating buff (takes after his dad at the same age), and who informed me that the current term is "skating

If you love skateboarding you should buy this book. It's a nice history that is intelligently written. It talks about skateboard culture with the alienated, angry kids, and how it is so different from

organized sports. It covers the early beach culture skaters, punk rock skaters, Dogtowners and the beginning of vert riding. This book is fun to read. It's smart and almost scholarly but Jocko Weyland keeps it fun and exciting at the same time. Check out my book about growing up as a punk skater kid during the early 80s: One Step Beyond: A Teenage Odyssey in 1980s Los Angeles (Volume 1)

Best book ever wrote

I bought for my son. Even though a higher level of reader he read it to get the stories.

Echoes many of my sentiments from the early days. As for the days surrounding my involvement, it is how I remember it, and how I intended it. That never happens, but it did in this book, and I don't even know this guy, and never talked to him. He did use some of my photos without asking me though, and I never got a dime. I can be reached through Thrasher's publisher, in the event there is a check waiting for me, and no where to mail it.

As a lifelong skateboarder, I was stoked (yes, I said 'stoked') to see a book like this come out. And I retained my stoke during the book's introduction. The introduction could stand alone as an inspired and revelatory essay. But after slogging through the first few chapters, I couldn't go on. I found the writing style to be simultaneously dry and overwritten. A bit of a feat really. It often feels as though the author's writing style was to get through a checklist of datapoints. The Answer Is Never states data without inspiration or revelation. So while it achieves textbook status, it omits the quizzes at the end of each chapter. The editing is flat, and the copyediting is dismal. Mislaid lines of text and typos abound.

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

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.

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