

Hi, I'm Christian and I'm an addict. Recently, during a particularly low point, I wrote something for myself to try and snap myself out of the spiral I was in. I'd like to share it now in case any of you out there are silently suffering from the same problem...

WHY YOU SHOULD STOP WATCHING SKATE VIDEOS

Bro, look at yourself. In that split second after the Thrasher logo flames out, catch a glimpse of your reflection within that blackened screen and see yourself for how you truly are...

You're addicted to watching skate videos, and your own skateboarding is suffering as a result.

You need an intervention, and who better to give you one than you? Let's return you to your innocent Origins and help you kick the nasty Habitat... (Uh oh, already you see how these videos have poisoned your mind!)

REASON #1... IT WASTES TIME

Let's do a little math: You've seen "Sorry" at least 200 times, that's 166 hours. Add that to what you've spent watching "Sight Unseen," "Fulfill the Dream," "Man Down," and "Lost and Found," and that makes more than 500 hours of viewing.

Studies say it takes only 400 hours of practice to reach basic fluency in another language. So, if you had been studying Japanese instead of rewatching those classics, you might actually be able to pronounce your favorite skaters' names correctly.

REASON #2... IT LEADS TO DEVIANT TASTES

Research into pornography addicts suggests that the more content they expose themselves to, the more extreme and hardened their tastes become.

In a skate video addict, this might manifest in weird ways:

The algorithm may auto-play you into the realm of the vloggers. You'll let it play out of some combination of curiosity and laziness, but before you know it, you're being recruited into the Braille Army by Aaron Kyro and practicing your *"don't forget to like and subscribe!"* in the mirror.

Alternatively, you might spiral into the core, dredging up ancient issues of 411, direct depositing your checks to the Secret Tape's bank account, and eventually devolving into one of those nostalgia-infected nerds that can't hear a note without screaming, "Who skated to it?"

Either outcome is perverse, and you're better off avoiding these forces altogether.

REASON #3... IT CREATES UNREALISTIC STANDARDS

Skateboarding skill is subjective, but the range on which you judge yourself is informed by the representations of it that you see. And when you see a video called This Is Skateboarding, and it doesn't look anything like the skateboarding you're remotely capable of, you might start to think, "Maybe I'm a poser."

However, these edits, by definition, excise a lot of the bails, bondo, stress and sacrifices put in on the backend, and are but a showy simulacrum of what an actual skateboarding session is like.

(You might argue that Rough Cuts are okay, or at least a lesser evil. But don't be fooled, their supposed rawness makes them even more sinister deceptions.)

LASTLY, #4. IT LIMITS CREATIVITY

I once read that straight couples aren't as sexually satisfied as people in queer relationships because they've seen so many narrative tropes about how sex is "supposed" to go, they're stuck reenacting those and never spend the time to discover what's most fun and feels best to their idiosyncratic selves.

Skate videos have a similarly stultifying effect, keeping you from tapping into your private reservoir of creativity, and preventing you from getting off your best skateboarding. Rodney Mullen didn't have any videos to binge before inventing all the tricks in that barn in Florida, and that same barn of astounding possibilities is accessible to any skater willing to free themselves from the trappings of reference.

Skate video consumption has what's called a Supra-normal (that's Supra as in Skytop) effect on your psychology, meaning it activates the brain's reward center without the exertion that's supposed to provide for that release. Your mind is literally being tricked into feeling like you've skated—but it's *you* who should be doing the tricks, not the videos.

So close out that Thrasher window once and for all, and go skate... Well, maybe after you watch the new Ishod part one more time.

—THANKS—

(read at an event organized by Kyle Beachy for Slow Impact, 2023)