Skate Life
Yochim, Emily Chivers

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Acknowledgments

*Skate Life* has been accompanied by and ushered through great joys and great sorrows, and I have many friends, colleagues, mentors, and family members to thank for seeing it and me through. The words throughout this book are punctuated by many lives, and it is my hope that the following paragraphs can convey my deep appreciation for their contributions.

In the course of writing, I have developed friendships and professional relationships with many thoughtful, passionate, and smart people. It was an honor and a pleasure to work with Susan Douglas, whose *Where the Girls Are* suggested to my undergraduate self that academic work could be both smart and a delight to read. As my graduate cochair, Susan provided sage and pragmatic writing advice, modeled dedicated and energetic engagement in academe, and offered clear and sharp comments that always shepherded my thinking. Bambi Haggins, from my first steps into graduate school, demonstrated dedication, love, and creativity, which allowed me to write with confidence and joy. Bambi’s rigorous commitment to the significance of pop culture, her venerable writing and editing, and her nuanced understanding of theory and practice have made my work more dynamic and complex. I’ll never forget sketching out my first-year research project with her and hearing her exclaim, “This is a book!” Derek Vaillant’s keen enthusiasm for theoretical debate and discussion and his willingness to work through the multiple layers of theory that accompany interdisciplinarity have both challenged and inspired me. Robin Means Coleman’s lively and sagacious approach to
research is a consummate model, and her pointed and supportive critiques brought new energy to this project and made my work more rigorous.

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I've also been granted a great deal of institutional support that gave me the time necessary to complete this ethnographic, historical, and textual analysis. The University of Michigan’s Rackham Regents Fellowship and Rackham One-Term Dissertation Writing Fellowship each provided time off from teaching so that I could focus on research and writing. I was also fully supported by the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan, which provided a Winthrop Chamberlain Research Award and a Dissertation Research Award. I am grateful to the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at the University of Michigan for the opportunity to be a part of its Community of Scholars program, which provided me both the funding and the community necessary to usher this project along.

My friends and colleagues Megan Biddinger, Sarah Crymble, Kamille Gentles, and Debra Burns Melican brought their vastly impressive brains to my work, reading countless drafts, listening to too many presentations, and talking through theoretical quandaries that reminded me how exciting research can be. More important, each of these women has been a trusty
confidante and supportive ally through the peaks and valleys of, well, life. Megan, always creative and passionate as she grapples with theoretical and social problems, has inspired me to demand more of myself and society, and together she and I are absolute writing dynamos. Sarah’s thoughtful and empathic wisdom has ushered me through much and served as a model for staying true to oneself and others. Her theoretical prowess and dedication to her work are exemplary. I am ever grateful for my friendship with Kamille and the phone calls that have sustained our relationship. Time and time again, her compassion, humor, and astute questions and comments about my work reinvigorated and inspired me. Debbie’s energy, courage, and style move me to cull as much I can from all of my experiences. She read over 100 pages of my work at a moment of last-minute desperation and gave me astute, clear, and invaluable feedback. Each of these women has touched my work in many ways, but, more important, they have enriched my life.

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This volume truly would not exist were it not for the skateboarders.
More than willing participants in my research, these young men have come to represent hope, passion, youthful vigor, and humor, and I deeply value their friendship. All of the boys happily provided thoughtful responses to my questions in exchange for a bit of food, but Mason, Andrew, Marcus, Sikander, Davidson, and Eric went above and beyond, welcoming me into their lives, guiding me through skate culture, and providing a humorous and hip respite from schoolwork. I am glad to call them friends.

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Great big thanks to all those who knew me before. My close friends Bethany Lewis, Nicole Conrad, Maria File, and Timilee Vaughn have been steadfast in their support, celebrating my accomplishments along with me and keeping my head above water when I was about to drown in work. The Yochim family’s cheerful love and creative humor are always comforting, and their resolute love and commitment to Elliot have been both invaluable and touching. I thank them for this and their countless hours of child care, without which this book would never have been completed. The Chivers family has been supportive in many, many ways. My mom, Mary Chivers, listened to regular end-of-semester breakdowns and cheered me through every accomplishment. I have been especially lucky to have her since I became a mother. The hours and energy she has given to help me through the challenges of parenting are priceless, and I’m happy to be able to share the joys of parenting with her as well. She, too, has offered hours of child care for which I am fantastically thankful. My mom is a model of grace and
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When it comes down to it, we all study what we know and worry about, and I have known and worried about many men. My men past and present inspire and drive my work, and this book is dedicated to them. I lost my brother Colin, too suddenly and too soon, in 2004, and I forever miss his tender love and mocking humor. Baby Elliot motivated me to finish my work in a way that no one else could. His quiet joy, thoughtful curiosity, sweet demeanor, and warm love give me great pleasure, and he just makes me an enormously proud mama. And, of course, Chris Yochim, my longtime love, best friend, and partner, has offered irreplaceable support, encouragement, and love through the demands of research, teaching, and writing. The model skateboarder, Chris’s sensitivity, gentleness, and creativity have shown me that men can get it right. He always brought me back to earth, reminding me of the absurdity of hegemony, problematics, and theory in the face of true love, friendships, and the everyday joys of regular life. I thank him forever.