

# Intergenerational Conflict

What can skateboarding tell us about the struggles for legitimacy in the field of sports?

**Alex Dumas**

School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa

**Sophie Laforest**

Département de kinésiologie, Université de Montréal

Published on the Internet,

[www.idrottsforum.org/articles/dumas-laforest/dumas-laforest080409.html](http://www.idrottsforum.org/articles/dumas-laforest/dumas-laforest080409.html)

(ISSN 1652-7224), 2008-04-09

Copyright © Alex Dumas & Sophie Laforest 2008. All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purposes of criticism and review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author.

The Hungarian-born, Jewish sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893–1947) received his higher education in Germany, taught by Georg Simmel, among others, and worked for some time for Alfred Weber, Max's brother. Mannheim had become professor of sociology in Frankfurt when, in 1933, he felt the need to quit Germany and the new Nazi regime for England, where he enjoyed a short but successful academic career. In his essay "The Problem of Youth in Modern Society, published in 1943, Mannheim developed the idea that every society will have problems with its youth. The younger generations have no a priori vested interest in the society they live in: on the contrary, the existing social, economic and cultural order has been forced upon them, and they feel no natural loyalty to the established social system. Youth will not necessarily show interest in the established society, they would rather be inclined to question the order of older generations, their politics and policies, their social norms. And herein lies the core of every youth revolt at any time. The revolt and its intrinsic ideas, values and morals are also the seeds out of which alternative systems of social life can grow and evolve – as an idea or as experimental islands within and without the establishment. Mannheims generational theory, further elaborated in his essay "The Problem of Generations", has of late, following a long fallow period, been brought to the fore anew – a development that, however, only in isolated cases can be found in Nordic social science.

The value of supplementing the classic sociological categories class, gender and ethnicity (race) with a generational perspective is aptly demonstrated by Alex Dumas and Sophie Laforest in their analysis of the difficulties encountered by the modern skateboard generation when seeking acceptance for the skate culture and the need for considerable investments that accompany the sportification of skateboarding. The empirical material is gathered at the skateparks of Montreal; eleven of them have been studied during a two-year period by observation (383 days) and 23 in-depth interviews with young skaters of various ages and of both sexes. The authors also performed a press review of the most topical issues related to the local skateboarding scene. The skate culture can certainly be considered an alternative cultural expression – and skateboarding definitely an alternative sport – quite in line with Mannheim's theory, and the skaters are more or less frustrated at every point in their quest for acceptance and places to perform their sport. Local authorities as well as local inhabitants seem to find the skaters a nuisance and a threat. Dumas' and Laforest's study and their article for [idrottsforum.org](http://idrottsforum.org) offers valuable insights into a crucial part of sociological theory development, as well as a picture of the skater generation, its composition, its common values and its goals; and beyond that they present the essential features of the process of sportification and of the difficulties in creating legitimacy for new, generational sports.

## Introduction

Many municipalities in North-America and in Europe have attempted to cater to the demand of skateboarding, which has become one of the most popular physical activities amongst youth (Hamel and Goulet, 2006). However, many of these efforts have been unsuccessful and many questions pertaining to the structure, planning and organization of the activity remain unanswered. Since its origin in the 1960's, this activity has been inhibited by the enforcement of trespassing regulations, the attempts of citizens' to reduce youth gatherings and the emission of public health restrictions on street skateboarding. In a time when public health institutions are engaged in unprecedented efforts to counter the sedentary lifestyles of youth, it is surprising that little information has been collected on the social structures that influence the practice of such a fashionable youth sport. This article aims to fill this gap by identifying and understating the social mechanisms involved with youth participation in skateboarding

Sport practices have often been used as indicators of power relations in society (Bourdieu' 1984). If in the past, social class and gender have received much attention, the new sport forms being practiced by the youth of today testify to the value of also looking into 'generation' as an analytical category. These changes in the field of sport and their underlying conditions are just beginning to be described. For instance, Belinda Wheaton (2004) has coined the term 'lifestyle sports' to represent these historically new sport forms, generally associated with youth, and related to creativity, aesthetics and risks. Additionally, in his prospective analysis of sport, Pociello (1999) characterises these transformations as the trends towards individualization and personalization of activities, personal aspirations for autonomy, and the quest for adventure in areas dislocated from traditional sporting spaces. This article refers to skateboarding as a lifestyle sport, and it will provide evidence of how it is engendering generational tensions with regards to the legitimization of sport practices, the sharing of public spaces and the allocation of public resources in sports. Our results suggest that the outcomes of such struggles often disadvantaged youth groups who hold less resources and demographic power.

## Background and methodology

In 2003, the *Secrétariat au Loisir et au Sport* (SLS), a governmental agency aiming to promote physically active lifestyles within safe environments commissioned us to assess the quality of public skateboarding venues in Montreal, Québec (Laforest and Dumas, 2003). Our preliminary findings revealed that although most skateparks were relatively safe, their social and physical environments were not conducive to increase or maintain a regular practice. We were faced with many underused skateparks, and with many skaters who preferred skateboarding outside of parks or who considered withdrawing altogether. We thus expanded the aim of the study to include a deeper examination of the mechanisms involved with youth participation. After two years of data collecting with the help of 12 research assistants, constituting of 383 days of observation in 11 skateparks, 23 in-depth interviews with male and female youth skateboarders, and a press review of the most topical issues

related to the local skateboarding scene we were getting a good idea what was hindering the practice of this activity – not only within, but also outside skateparks. Our data strongly suggests that these participation problems are best conceptualized through a generational approach. Up to now, there is little evidence that previous strategies encouraging traditional forms of sport will be effective for promoting an active lifestyle within youth groups (Tomlinson *et al.*, 2005). This study answers the call of social scientists that are vouching for novel approaches to understand social inequality in the field of sport and to increase the physical activity levels of youth.

## Generation as an analytical category

Unlike the analytical categories of social class, gender and ethnicity, the study of generation and intergenerational conflict has been underdeveloped in sociology of sport. Generally speaking, there are two distinct but related perspectives for understanding intergenerational conflict that are applicable to the study of sport. The first emphasizes the struggles over scarce resources between generations, suggesting that this will be at the forefront of political debates in the years to come. Many demographic factors, such as the ageing of the post-war generation, low fertility rates and rising life expectancy are impacting upon resource allocation between age groups (Dumas & Turner, 2007). Public forums are repeatedly reporting the angst of younger generations towards age-based policies. For example, issues surrounding the pension crisis and the increase in public expenditures in health care systems are attracting considerable attention. In Canada, it is predicted that the population of youth aged between 0 and 17, will drop from 23% in 2000 to 17% in 2051; conversely, the proportion of older adults aged 65 and over will expand from 13% to 24-27% (George *et al.*, 2001). In light of these shifts, some social theorists are evoking fears of a gerontocracy, whilst others are alarmed by youth rebellions (Fukuyama, 2000). The second perspective has more to do with confrontations which occur because of conflicting views-of-the-world. In this case, the focus is placed primarily on generational thoughts and dispositions fashioned by socio-historical events (e.g., wars, economic instability) and personal experiences. This is exemplified by the struggles over symbolic capital within various spheres of social life such as those seen in popular music and fashion (Edmunds and Turner, 2002).

Recent works in the sociology of generations draw from the legacies of Mannheim and Bourdieu by developing an analytical framework based on some of their key ideas (Eyerman and Turner, 1998; Gilleard and Higgs, 2005; Mauger, 1990; Edmunds & Turner, 2002). In his pivotal essay '*The problem of Generations*', Mannheim establishes the foundations for a research program on generations distinct from biological approaches to generations (pre-determined age-cohorts), which he believes are unable to explain the socio-historical conditions involved in shaping generations. In this perspective, new generations are not determined by the succession of equivalent time frames of 30 or 40 years, but rather by socio-political events. By being distinct from previous generations, each new generation generates a renewal effect which serves as a fundamental factor of historical change. Furthermore, Mannheim's work brings conceptual clarity to generational phenomena: for instance, his concept of *generational location* refers to groups that share a socio-historical

destiny, while *generation as actuality* involves the possibilities and constraints which they are collectively subjected to, and *generational unit* signifies the various subgroups within them that constitute their heterogeneity. By focusing on the distinctive socio-historical realities that shape age groups, and their interrelations, his approach thus differs from those who solely use 'age' as an analytical unit. It inquires less about youth *per se*, but rather about how it is to be young today, and in relation to previous generations.

Mannheim's work does not offer a complete theory of generational inequalities and for this reason it has been complemented with the works of Bourdieu by applying his social class model to the concept of generations. Mauger (1990) provides an example of how this integration looks through the concept of generational habitus, which refers to sets of embodied schemes of perceptions, appreciations and dispositions that are harmonized with the conditions of existence of one's historical period. In other words, this concept mediates new generational experiences (the embodiment of generational living conditions) and new forms of expression (socio-cultural practices), so that generations differ to the extent that each holds its own legitimate view-of-the-world and distinctive cultural practices, because each has adapted to the condition of their generational location. This point also sets the grounds for a theory of intergenerational power relations by emphasizing the struggles over the access to various forms of scarce resources. For the sake of this article, then, we will be drawing from both approaches to define generation as a *class of social agents of similar ages (age groups who relate similarly to a social phenomenon) that have witnessed similar historical events, that share similar experiences, aspirations, feelings and ideas, and that face similar constraint and opportunities.*

## Skateboarding as a lifestyle sport

The values tied to the Beat Generation were linked to the emergence of new sport forms that were adopted by anti-conformist youth gatherings in the United States (Calogirou and Touché, 1995). If lifestyle sports and skateboarding can be seen as a response to traditional and conventional sports, its current high status amongst youth groups should now also be tied to its institutionalisation and commercialisation (Humphreys, 1997). Indeed, skateboarding has come a long way since the 1960's and is now a mainstream activity among youth. For example, while snowboarding has already made its debut at the Nagano Olympic Games, skateboarding is now under review by the International Olympic Committee for its place amongst the Games of 2012. On a more local level, skateboarding has now been recognized by the Ministry of Education of Québec as an official sport within sport based program curricula. The wide presence of lifestyle sports is tied to a number of social forces that drive younger generations to differentiate themselves from their predecessors. The extent to which they are practiced certainly constitutes a pivotal point in sport development.

The popularity of lifestyle sports among today's youth can be included in what Mannheim (1972, p. 65) would qualify as an *entelechy of a generation*, which refers to the changes of attitude, impulses, and structuring units within a society that are appreciated and cultivated within a generation. As a cultural practice firmly established in the field of cultural

production of goods and services and structured around generational markets, this category of sports can be seen as an expression of a generational habitus. It is the lifestyle of skateboarders, the social recognition of their sport and the existence of a plethora of goods, specialized spaces and institutions which contribute to the force of their movement.

Although the demographics of skaters in our sample varied considerably, it was clear they shared an ethos that accurately corresponded to Pociello's future trends in sports and Wheaton's conception of lifestyle sports. A comparative analysis of the interviews suggested that the distinctiveness of skateboarding could partly be related to individual-collective sports, as described in Wacquant's (2003) account of boxing culture. As individuals, they develop athletic skill, seek high sensations, cultivate personal style, concentrate on their physical prowess, protect themselves from injury, and work on their self-confidence. As a collective, they share an identity, value spectacle, socialize with one another, connect to an anti-establishment culture and share an interest in the rich cultural world of skateboarding (art, magazines, movies, music, and fashion style).

### **Skateboarders as a 'concrete group'**

Over the years, various social actors have been active in combating the negative attitudes that have hindered the development of skateboarding. These social agents that participate in the historical changes of a field function as *concrete groups*. According to the theory of generations, these generational units contribute to the birth of fundamental intensions of a generation; they meet through social exchanges, mentally stimulate each other and ultimately work together in order to concretize their intentions (Mannheim, 1972). The novelty of their ideas acts as a social force that brings together adherents to their 'project'. As worded by Mannheim (1972), they develop integrative attitudes that give justice to the requirements of their common generational location. In this sense, the pioneers of skateboarding in the 1960s acted as initial agents of change that diffused skateboarding culture at international levels.

The skaters interviewed for this study can also fit the description as members of concrete groups, in the sense that they were active agents in the promotion of skateboarding in contexts where they were often facing public disapprobation. The long term involvement of the older skaters, their greater experience and the scale of their actions were particularly striking. For instance, some skaters had tailored their education (e.g., degrees in industrial design and urban planning) or had developed a number of specialized skills (e.g., website manager, skateboard designer) to ameliorate skateboarding facilities. The following quotes illustrate Pascal's involvement in awareness activities, such as setting up petitions.

I passed around a petition in my school to build a skatepark... About 200 to 250 people signed... Then I presented it to city hall. I don't know if it is because of me, but my other friend did the same thing and I think they [the city councilors] felt pressured, so they decided to build us our park. I am probably the most active person in my park... I even went directly to the mayor's house to ask him to fix-up our park!  
(Pascal, age 15)

## The problem of legitimacy

Intergenerational struggles involve a problem of legitimacy and the tensions they produce mainly involve conflicts over the transmission and sharing of power, privileges and resources (Bourdieu, 1993; Edmunds and Turner, 2002). In periods of rapid social change, older generations may be unable to adjust to a different social situation and may revolt in reaction to the new modes of thinking of youth. In contrast, emerging generations also tend to legitimize their way of life in the face of disapproval from older generations. To employ Bourdieu's (1993) formula, what is natural and reasonable for one generation might be unthinkable and scandalous to the other. In this sense, such youth groups have a vested interest in sending the old in 'old age' and the old have their own interest by sending younger generations to youth. In other words, there is a political strategy to define older generations as outmoded, old fashion and obsolete, and the newer ones as immature, unready and unworthy. These opposing attitudes illustrate the dynamic in skateboarding.

The social recognition of skateboarding by older generations is central for the equitable allocation of resources and the sharing of public space needed to guarantee a satisfactory practice. Yet, most skaters believed that their sport was harmed because it suffered from a problem of legitimacy. These concerns were generally expressed by evoking their evictions from public spaces, their lack of support from public decision makers and in the denunciations of skateboarding as being a non-athletic, transitory youth pastime. Also, many skaters strongly rejected the idea that they were associated with violence, vandalism, ill-behavior, and a menace to public peace. These negative connotations were believed to fuel the intolerance of citizens and to restrain public investments. In fact, skaters were clearly oversensitive about this issue, emphasizing that they were 'normal' and friendly. For Isabelle, the feeling that her sport was belittled was grounded in her frequent rebuttals from her social environment. The problem of legitimacy expressed in her quote is rooted in the different values that social groups give to sport.

I think it's a bit *shitty* that they've just torn down our skatepark; they had to do it because they didn't build it right in the first place. I wanted to get another one built, so I began talking to the neighbors...to get support from them. They were like: 'That's so great! Were glad it's gone!' I just can't get it. There weren't any problems with that skatepark. OK, a few kids took their joint once in a while, that's it! It's not as if there were any hard drugs there. It's so easy to point the skatepark as being the problem. People say: 'it's because of the skatepark that kids are taking drugs'. They can't say: 'take that kids' park away', even though teens are smoking dope there too. Skaters are ordinary kids... I think it's a shame that people take the time to make petitions against skateparks. It's totally stupid.... I went to city hall to get things going again... I spoke to my city councilor, and asked him to help us. He answered me: 'maybe another day' (Isabelle, age 21)

## Negotiating public spaces: two highly mediated events

Intergenerational conflicts also involve a competitive struggle over valued forms of capital (Edmunds and Turner, 2002). These arise when a critical mass of individuals challenge the *status quo* and judge the resource distribution between generations as unsatisfactory. For Edmunds and Turner (2002), as strategic groups, older generations are perceived by younger generations as conservatively controlling the social and cultural resources by constraining their access. The question of legitimacy weighs strongly in the negotiation of public spaces, especially when it involves prime real-estate. Two highly publicized events in Montreal relating to the closure of skateboarding venues have sparked the mobilization of skaters and have accentuated the confrontation with various public actors. Both these cases illustrate the problem of ownership of public space and infrastructure. In 1998, it was announced that the largest public skatepark of Montreal, the *Tazmahal*, was to be demolished and replaced with Quebec's prestigious National Library (*La Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec*) at the cost of 140 million dollars. Before its demolition, the city of Montreal announced its decision to rapidly relocate the skatepark, which had attracted approximately 55 000 skaters per year (Bergeron, 2006). During the following decade the project has repeatedly been delayed for economic and political reasons. Recently however, the website documenting the progress of the dossier has claimed victory after the city announced its opening in 2008 (<http://www.taz.ca>).

In a similar case, the Saputo multinational, owner of a professional soccer team, announced the demolition of Montreal's most famous skateboarding venue in order to set up a place for its new soccer facilities. The *Big-O* attracts a large number of skaters during summer days and has reached an iconic status by being recognized by international skateboarding magazines (Walsh and Tison, 2006). The news of the demolition precipitated skaters to launch the 'Save the Pipe' campaign (<http://www.savethepipe.blogspot.com>). The controversy was short lasted because of the mobilization of skaters and their extensive coverage by national and provincial media. Despite the validity of the claims of the skaters, these highly mediated controversies were framed in a way to reaffirm a generational structure.

## Negotiating public spaces: the politics of building skateparks

Skateparks are present in over 600 municipalities of Québec and 90% of them have been built in the last decade (Robinson-Chouinard, 2006). Their presence has been viewed as countermeasure to the reluctance of many groups towards skateboarding in public areas. Little information exists however, on the quality and the satisfaction of the park inventory. For the skaters, the large majority of public skateparks did not conform to the expectations of youth. Although we don't have the quantitative data that testify to their claims, the interviews can provide valuable information to explore this question. This evaluation corresponded to our own on-site observations that revealed a great variability in park attendance; in some cases, poorly designed parks were practically unattended.

By referring to Bourdieu's model, we make the assumption that it is the type and volume of capital possessed by each generational group that determines their power to pursue their projects. For instance, in the present case, the economic and political capital needed by skaters to convince local governments from building quality skateboarding venues is largely possessed by the older generations. The power divide created by these imbalances covered the nature, magnitude and allocation of resources. Although the skaters were the principal users of these infrastructures, they may not have been actively involved in their construction. According to Jones and Graves (2000), this problem stems from a facility-based mentality that supports the sport without supporting the needs of the users. Therefore, if public investments were welcome by some skaters, they were very critical about who regulated the parks and how they were administrated. For the skaters, especially those who were more experienced, the low quality and poor design of the parks were clearly points of tension that needed to be addressed. Gabriel's quote is representative of many others who cite the absence of consultation as a possible reason for poorly designed parks.

The city people tell us: "Voilà! Hey guys, we built this park just for you!", But deep down, it's really not what the kids wanted. You know, young skaters know their stuff. Even if they're young, they know much more about skateboarding than adults. When the city puts cheap asphalt and build little plastic structures that break down after a year, they're really taking them for fools! So they don't feel respected, even though they were given a certain amount of money (Gabriel, age 30)

The lack of consultation was also amplified by the sentiment that they had little control over their sport. Again, it was the city workers that were strongly criticized for the problems relating to low attendance, lack of services and poor design.

I find it a bit stupid that they [civil servants] are investing in promoting sports, and not in sports installations. In this skatepark, they don't even pick up the garbage. It's really a problem. (Sam, age 15)

We would like to have competitions once in a while, but insuring a skatepark for a competition cost too much for us. Instead of building other parks, the city should rethink how they do their budgets (Snag, age 24)

They don't understand us at city hall. They keep managing their budgets by small districts. They should take all that money for building better skateparks... The city's architect doesn't know a thing about skateparks... If he receives a bid that matches the price he's looking for, he'll say: "yep!, That's good, put that in the park" (Isabelle, age 21)

The location of skateparks has also generated tensions between skaters and local deciders. There have been countless accounts of citizens endorsing initiatives to support youth leisure facilities, but in the same breath, halting some projects by brandishing 'not in my back yard' arguments. Again, neighbours raised the possible negative consequences on the community of having nearby youth groupings. As pointed out elsewhere, environing home-

owners are apprehensive about the coming of skateparks for a number of reasons (Travlou, 2003).

### **Negotiating public spaces: street skateboarding**

Skateparks have been perceived as a means to control the spatial mobility of youth (Jone and Graves, 2000); this is an element strongly in opposition to the freedom that is found upon in lifestyle sports. This being considered, intergenerational tensions over public space were more likely to appear when skaters were present in public spaces where they were directly in contact with non-skaters. Here, public areas (streets, sidewalks, and bicycle paths), stair cases and other pieces of urban architecture had to be negotiated. The opposing views in such conflicts reflect a situation where one party, associated with the establishment, has a disproportionate amount of power over the other, the skateboarders. On the one hand, the skaters are preoccupied with their access, their security, the quality of roads and more appropriate urban planning for non-motorized vehicles. On the other hand, law enforcers and security guards are preoccupied with trespassing, shop owners with economic viability, public health actors with security of skaters and pedestrians, local politicians with damaged public property, and citizen groups with problems associated with youth gatherings. The two following quotes illustrate Marie's and Philippe's disarray in front of attitudes from street users and citizens that are in conflict with their ways of life.

The taxis are the biggest problem. You know, I was already spat on while I was skateboarding on the street... They think they own the streets. Instead of keeping to their lane, they come very close to you, and then accelerate or toot the horn. It's quite scary. (Marie, age 29)

Older people don't like skaters. They don't like us because we make noise. When we go skating on my friend's ramp, they'll keep shouting at us 'Stop or we'll phone the police!' or they'll say: 'I never did that kind of stuff when I was young!' (Philippe, age 13)

Each generation develops a number of strategies that are in synch with their interests. It is a common strategy in many countries to circumscribe the practice of skateboarding through laws, regulations, fines, curfews and surveillance. In 1979, Norway applied the most radical action by banning the practice for 6 years. In Québec, Article 499 of the Road Security Code clearly states that it is forbidden to skateboard on public roadways or sidewalks – an infraction punishable by a fine of \$30 to \$60. Although the law is not strongly enforced, most skaters interviewed have been fined at least once. Other strategies involve evictions from public property that are more or less formalized, but very common, through various means such as requests to leave, verbal and physical threats and police assistance. More recently, skateboarding deterrents, commonly known as *skatestoppers*, are used by private and public sectors to prevent skateboarding and its related damage to property. Debates are currently raging on the web about the growing presence of these devices. For Borden (2001)

many of these attitudes stem from the perception that skateboarders deny the production of urban space for the exchange of commodities; similar to the homeless, they are treated as trespassers, as they occupy public space without engaging in economic activity. He judges the multiple efforts to regulate the practice as disproportionate, considering that skaters are neither a significant force nor threat to established ideologies.

## Conclusion

This article presents the heuristic potential of the works of Pierre Bourdieu and Karl Mannheim for studying generational conflict and its relation to new forms of sports. It also suggests the appropriateness of using generation as an alternative analytical category for understanding social inequalities. A generation however, is not an easily defined term as it includes notions of age, culture and history, and needs to be viewed in relationship to other generations. It also causes a problem of boundaries because, contrary to the constancy of age cohorts, people of similar ages are not always members of a distinct generation and conversely, members of a generation can be constituted into various age groups (e.g., children, adolescents and young adult). For this reason, researchers should be cautious when applying a generational analysis.

In this study, it was suggested that skaters, although a heterogeneous group, share a generational culture and similar forms of activism linked to promoting lifestyle sports. As Mauger (1990) would argue, it is the social alchemy taking part amongst skaters which united them and oriented their strategies. It was clearly the older and more experienced skaters of the group who, due to their life experiences, were more energetic in gathering the conditions needed to enable future generations to practice their sport. The positions held by skaters also reflect wider power struggles. From a generational point of view, skateboarding is a relatively new form of sport, and although it is firmly embedded in youth culture, it remains undermined by the existing institutions.

Central to this problem is the issue of the legitimacy of skateboarding as a mass sport. This was exemplified in conflicts over scarce resources, particularly with regards to diverging perspectives of the parties involved in the negotiation of public space and in the politics of building skateparks. Drawing on Bourdieu, these conflicts occur because the capital required for meeting the needs of skaters are largely possessed by the adult population who perceive as unnecessary and aversive the changes proposed by younger generations. In this sense, we can perceive the practice of skateboarding as being doubly determined by the hoarding of capital by older generations and the low power they confer to younger generations.

Can such conflicts over scarce resources be avoided? For Bourdieu (1993), this occurs when older generations are able to control the succession of power by limiting the ambitions of younger generations, who pre-emptively would want to transform society or control 'their' resources. Another way is for younger generations to convince older generations of the legitimacy of their projects, and with this, relegate traditional forms of practices to the past. With these points in mind, it is unlikely in the short term that generational clashes will disappear but rather, will be subjected to a number of cultural changes. Indeed, as

traditional sport institutions are remaining firmly grounded in society, concrete groups are increasingly exerting pressures to assist the growth of lifestyle sports. In sum, skaters have become significant actors in the recent development of sports and their efforts will likely continue to be rewarded in the future. Following this, perhaps a certain degree of intergenerational conflict is needed to generate the creative tensions necessary for productive historical changes and the cultural diversity required to increase sport participation.

On a final note, this study has implications for intergenerational justice in health. Previous research on intergenerational relations has concentrated its efforts on the welfare of the elderly, while often neglecting youth issues. As demographic imbalances escalate, policy makers in public health should be concerned with providing adapted sport institutions and appropriate social environments for all generations. In the current state however, this objective will require a great dose of creativity to solve the problem of inactivity facing the youth of today.

## References

- Bergeron, R. (2006) Relocaliser le Taz et le Big-O au Parc olympique, *Le Devoir*, edition of the 28th of August, available at: <http://www.ledevoir.com/2006/08/28/116830.html>.
- Borden, I (2001) *Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body*, Berg: New-York.
- Bourdieu, P (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Mass: Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) Youth is just a word, in *Sociology in Question*, pp. 94-102. Sage: London.
- Bourdieu, P (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Mass: Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Calogirou, C. and Touché, M. (1995) Sport-passion dans la ville: le skateboard, *Terrain*, 25, 37-48.
- Dumas, A., Turner, B.S. (2007) The life extension project: A sociological critique, *Health Sociology Review*, 16(1) 5-17.
- Eyerman, R., Turner, B.S. (1998) Outline of a theory of generations, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 1(1): 91-106
- Edmunds J. and Turner B. S. (2002) *Generations, culture and society*. Open University Press: Philadelphia.
- Fukuyama, F. (2002) *Our Posthuman Futures: Consequences of Biotechnology Revolutions*, Picador: New-York.
- George, M.V., Loh, S., Verma, R.B. and Shin E. (2001) *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories 2000-2026*, Government report published by Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 91-520-XPB, Ottawa.
- Gilleard, C. and Higgs, P., (2005) *Contexts of Ageing. Class, Cohort and Community*. Polity: Cambridge.
- Mannheim K. (1972). *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.: London
- Hamel, D., Goulet, C. (2006) Études des blessures subies au cours de la pratique d'activités récréatives été sportives au Québec en 2004, Gouvernement report published by the Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec: Québec.
- Humphreys, D. (1997) 'Shredheads go mainstream'? Snowboarding and alternative youth, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 1997, 32(2): 147-160.
- Jones, S. and Graves, A. (2000) Power play in public space: skateboard parks battlegrounds, gifts, and expressions of self, *Landscape Journal*, 19: 136-148
- Laforest, S., Dumas, A. (2003) *Recherche action portant sur les blessures survenant dans un parc de planche à roulettes de Montréal*. Government report published by the Secrétariat au Loisir et au Sport, available at: <http://www.mamsl.gouv.qc.ca/sportloisir/publications/securite/RapportPlancheRoulettes.pdf>
- Mauger, G. (1990). Postface. In K. Mannheim, *Le problème des générations*, pp. 85-115. Éditions Nathan: Condé-sur-Noireau.
- Pociello, C. (1999). *Sports et sciences sociales; histoire, sociologie et prospective*. Vigot: Paris.
- Robinson-Chouinard, B. (2006) *Guide d'aménagement et de gestion : parcs de planche à roulettes : efficaces et accessibles, accessibles et sécuritaires, adaptés au loisir des usagers*. Presses de l'Université du Québec: Montréal.

- Tomlinson, A, Ravenscroft, N, Wheaton, B and Gilchrist, P (2005) *Lifestyle Sports and National Sport Policy: An Agenda for Research*. Project Report. Sport England, London.
- Travlou, P. (2003) *Teenagers and Public Space: Literature Review*, Open Space Research Centre, Edinburgh. Available at: <http://www.openspace.eca.ac.uk/pdf/teenagerslitrev.pdf>
- Wacquant, L (2003) *Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Walsh B. and Tison M. (2006) *Pipe fiends: A visual overdose of Canada's most infamous skate sport*. Media MudScout: Montréal.
- Wheaton, B. (2004) Introduction: Mapping the lifestyle sport-scape. In B. Wheaton (Ed.), *Understanding Lifestyle sports: Consumption, identity and difference*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-28.