



A Stance Against the Skateboarding Ban at St. Francis

In late April of this year St. Francis High School in Calgary, decided to ban skateboards, of not only being used on school property but of being brought to school all together. The reason given is that a skateboard can be used as a weapon, so it represents a safety concern to the other students at the school. Following this logic, the school would have to ban hockey sticks, baseball bats, field hockey sticks, tennis racquets and even ping pong racquets from school property; so goodbye gym class! In fact using the school's logic any item that could be used as a weapon is subject to a school ban- so big brother: Get Started!

It's without a doubt that the 'weapon' excuse is just that, an excuse to underline the real reasoning behind the school's decision. The School board and School principal should just come out and say it, they banned skateboards from the school because they believe skateboarders to be 'pot smoking, class skipping, sex addicted, beer chugging teens that are up to no good'. This old stereotype has been used again and again by an old establishment that refuses to see outside the 'norm' of whatever that may be as something that is wrong and ill faded. We've seen this before in other ways, when rock and roll was first introduced, followed by rap, heavy metal, baggy clothes and so much more, that was seen as being anti-establishment- its followers were type casted against, thought of as being a bad influence on the good boys and girls of society. Being a skateboarder comes with all sorts of stereotypes and fair enough that's a part of life, and some of the stereotypes may be true, I for one despise an establishment that is backward looking and refuses to accept change as something good, i.e. remember Barak Obama's "Change is a good thing"? besides who wouldn't want to be a 'pot smoking, class skipping, sex addicted, beer chugging teen'? But that's not the point, when school officials go ahead and ban something based not on fact but on stereotypes they break the very moralities and tenets they choose to teach our youth, that we ought not judge someone on their appearances or on what we hear but on their character and actions. One would think a catholic school of all schools would fight to uphold this feature of our education system. The skateboard ban is not just a skateboarding issue, it is a societal issue, that when the very public institutions that are in-trusted to teach our youth about the consequences and long term effects of labeling and pre judging, choose to do the opposite, they become the problem not the solution to the problem.

This ban is not only a nuisance and irritant for the students attending St. Francis School; it should also be a rallying call to skateboarders and the like who feel skateboarding is fun and a way of life. Feel free to label us as you wish, just label facts not prejudice. Rather than quash skateboarding on school property, school officials should be promoting a sport that is centered on creativity, freedom and non-violence. So since it is the hockey playoffs why don't we all go ahead and cheer the next hockey brawl with the very officials who are for this ban.

For more information on this editorial contact Justin Hanna,
at justin@livinthedream.ca or call 416.924.9583
www.figjamapparel.com