

## My Extreme Dream

By: Spencer Breaux

I have a dream. I have a dream that one day the skateboarding industry will not subject female skateboarders to lower-class prizes and unfair prize purses in competitions. I have a dream that no one will consider skateboarding, and all extreme sports, male sports, but simply activities for all sexes to enjoy. I have a dream that eventually women and young girls will feel empowered to ride a skateboard and confident to compete against male and female competitors. I have a dream that someday girls across the country will skate in my brand of skateboard clothing and rock my line of shoes. I have dream that on television you will have the access to enjoy live girls' skateboarding events without having to travel miles and miles to see them up close.

One day, I hope to become a famous female skateboarder. Skating and competing for about four years, I have realized that, at many skateboard competitions, boys dominate number-wise. Usually, only about two girls compete out of approximately thirty children in skateboard events. In fact, most of the girls at the skatepark sit on the sidelines rooting for their brothers. I always wonder why they don't get out there and at least give skateboarding a shot! In my opinion, skateboarding ranks first among all action sports, and everyone, especially girls, should do it.

Unfortunately, this happens at many contests and, even at national events like the X-Games, the prize purses plummet to the ground for the winners of girls' events, yet they rocket into the sky for the victors of the men's contests. For example, in the Vans Pool Party, Nora Vasconcellos, the winner of the girls' event, won \$2,500, whereas Bucky Lasek, the winner of the men's event, received \$28,000. Girls do not win as much money because of the fact that the people who sponsor the events really don't care about the girls as much because women don't really have any fans. They simply want to sponsor the men and the men only. The skateboard industry usually neglects to put girls in skateboard advertisements because they think that girls won't help them sell their products. The girls you do see in magazines don't actually skate. This is only encouraging girls to sit and watch, instead of to skate.

I hope that this will change one day. In fact, it has already taken its first step to changing. Recently, Thrasher magazine featured Lizzie Armanto, a pro female skateboarder, inspiring a new generation of girl skaters. In addition, another professional female skateboarder, Amelia Brodka, has created a documentary called Underexposed, which presents the struggles that female skateboarders face. Amelia has screened this awakening film around the world. In fact, I appear in the credits, performing a trick that I landed in a girls' demo with Amelia and a few other pro skaters. For the past two years, Amelia has hosted a women's event called Exposure, which encourages girls to learn to skate and compete. Exposure has become one of the only all-girls' contests. Whenever I go there, I can feel the unity of the girls who all desperately want women's skateboarding to progress. It inspires me to make a change.

Since I've talked all about how female skateboarding needs to progress so much, you probably want to know how I will change it. To begin, I will try to attend every contest in my area to try to get people to watch me and realize that girls can skateboard. Also, I will purchase female lines of skateboard merchandise in stores instead of buying men's merchandise. Additionally, I will encourage girls to skate more by simply giving them a help up if they fall, or even granting them some advice if they need it. In conclusion, I will work to the best of my abilities to try to get noticed in a magazine or advertisement later in my life so that people will see me and think to themselves, "Wow, girls really can skate!" Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired me to fight for equality, whether it has to do with race, human rights, or gender. I realize that, right now, in the face of all of the other problems in the world, the female skateboarding industry doesn't seem like a big deal, but if everybody did one thing to help change the world, the globe would become a much better place, from one dream to another.