



United Skates

Film Study Guide

Director: Dyana Winkler and Tina Brown

US | Documentary | English | 2018 | 89 Minutes

Synopsis: A rousing tribute to roller-skating’s pivotal role in the African-American community, *United Skates* careens around the country, offering an intimate look at a lively subculture that’s under threat. Facing discriminatory policies and rink closures, committed skaters from around the country—including Chicago’s own Buddy Love—fight to preserve a space for people to come together and express themselves in sliding, bouncing, snapping glory.

Post-Screening Discussion Questions

1. How have skating rinks fostered hip hop and R&B music?
2. In what way was *World on Wheels* a sanctuary for its surrounding community in Los Angeles, particularly when it comes to gang violence?
3. What are sanctuaries in your community? Do you ever feel that you may lose those spaces? If those spaces were at risk, what would you do to keep them alive?

4. Shortly after World on Wheels is shut down, Phelicia's son goes to juvenile detention for theft. When he comes back home, the first thing he wants to do is skate. How can spaces like skating rinks benefit children and teenagers?
5. During what is referred to as "hell time," black skaters demonstrated to gain admittance into rinks. How has the segregation in roller skating rinks has changed since then? How is it still happening?
6. When Phelicia and her kids are kicked out of Moonlight Rollerway for the size of their wheels, the employee tells them she's "just doing her job." Is this true? Or do you think she shares responsibility in that situation?
7. Why does Buddy keep the price for World on Wheels cheap, even when he's struggling to afford running the business?
8. What do you think must be done in order to keep roller skating rinks alive?
9. For many of the people in this film, skating is a form of therapy or a way to escape hardships and stress. Think of your favorite hobby or activity, how does it improve your daily life?