

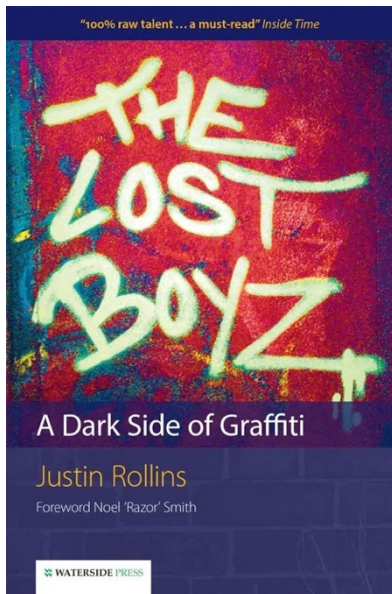


## Book Talk

### *The Lost Boyz: A Dark Side of Graffiti*

by Justin Rollins

Number of pages: 178



This autobiography tells a story of descent into a form of madness, in which self-destruction, anger, wanton behaviour and fear lie at the core. Aged just fourteen, and using the name 'Sevens', Rollins went from being a bullied child to leader of the Warriorz, a group of London street kids involved in graffiti-tagging and other crimes, including a series of violent encounters.

Foreword by **Noel 'Razor' Smith**: 'He became a criminal not through any desire to get rich or become a 'gangster' but because he so easily slipped through the cracks of a society that, mainly through the influence of the tabloid media, was quick to demonise the young as predators and 'lawless hoodies.'

We recommend this book if you enjoyed *That Peckham Boy* by Kenny Imafidon or *Sufferah* by Alex Wheatle.

**Discussion Questions** by Justin Rollins, author:

1. Do you think my offending behaviour stemmed from nature or nurture, or both?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Since my days spent in prison, do you think the prison environment has changed for better or worse?

3. My gang WZ went from a group of kids tagging to a full-on street gang. In that environment I felt a sense of family that I longed for. Why do you feel teenagers join gangs?

4. I experienced a lot of racism growing up which led to self-identity issues. Do you think much has changed in terms of the level of racism out there and is it still confusing for children from a mixed background?

5. Street artists like Banksy are celebrated and often protected and not prosecuted. But graffiti taggers and artists from my sub-culture are often arrested and imprisoned. What do you think of that?

*Thank you to the author, Justin Rollins, for writing these questions.*