



The Ross Retort

by Lisa Ross

CULTURE OF HATE

Super Bowl Sunday evening, KPBS will take a break from its usual edgy polar bear mating programming to air a do-not-miss documentary called the *Culture of Hate-Where Do We Go From Here* from Emmy Award winning film maker and Carmel Valley resident Lee Harvey.

The documentary explores the David Lynchian world of teenage white supremacists lurking in the shadows of the rustic community of Lakeside in east San Diego County, where traditional horse ranches and upscale nouveau riche ranchettes surround the economically down and out remnants of a traditional manufacturing working class left behind by San Diego's new technology economy.

While Lakeside seems thousands of miles away, not just geographically but culturally, socially and economically, alienated kids from broken homes rife with physical and substance abuse looking for scapegoats to account for hopelessness, exist among and in the midst of many communities in transition, right under the noses of even the most involved, says Harvard's white power expert Raphael Ezekial, consultant for the film.

And so, the documentary serves as a cautionary tale to community leaders, parents and school officials about not "letting kids be kids" when they begin to show signs of white power enthusiasm like doodling swastikas on their desks and sporting Hell's Angels tattoos. No community is immune to the tentacles of Nazi thugs reaching out for fresh recruits among vulnerable teens.

In 1995, Carmel Valley experienced a rash of tagging incidents at several local schools and public buildings. So enticing was the gang persona to a tagging crew of under-supervised Norstrom gangsta dressed sixth graders that they covered a new elementary school in sexist, obscene and threatening graffiti directed at some school mates late one night.

Two weeks later, Torrey Pines High was covered in far more ominous anti-Semitic and anti-Asian slogans, not the first or last event of this kind there, but the most publicized. The Highlands Shopping Center was a continual target for Carmel Valley youth searching for an identity defined by Marks-A-Lot. Tagging was hip.

But the community reacted. As a result of a public relations effort sponsored by the Carmel Valley News, the Carmel Valley Town Council, the Town Center management and then Carmel Creek Elementary school principal

Dorothy Wilson, town meetings were held, watch groups organized, paint spray cans removed from shelves by local merchants, and with the help of the city's graffiti abatement team, an ugly tide was turned.

Certainly, the city fathers and mothers of Lakeside will not be amused by the KPBS documentary that singles out their community for an examination of white supremacist youth. Carmel Valley residents are not happy that the celebrated Rancho Penasquitos teen attack on migrant workers has been forever dubbed "Carmel Valley Hate Crimes" by the local media.

But, while the Carmel Valley Hate crime really did not really happen in Carmel Valley nor was it committed by Carmel Valley kids—the Rancho Penasquitos teens beat up the migrant workers in Torrey Highlands—Lakeside is youth white supremacist Oz according to the hundreds of kids from all over the County who provided background for the KPBS documentary.

During conversations with Ms. Harvey on film, white power kids with skins decked out in self-mutilated swastikas, describe in chilling detail the circumstances of their lives and the crimes they committed out of blind hate that range from tagging sprees to the horrific stoning murder of a hard working Hispanic father of two small children.

It is little comfort knowing that the folks who are the subject of this important documentary live somewhere else because that somewhere else is really just down the road. With easy and free access to the Internet, hate is available to alienated, angry kids with sociopathic predilections 24/7 served up by real life adult sociopaths like San Diego's own Tom Metzger.

The teenaged Culture of Hate is hard to find around these parts—if white power teen groups do inhabit Del Mar, Carmel Valley and Rancho Santa Fe, no one is talking, at least to those of us who report to the public. It may be that the area has escaped the scourge, or it may be that our normal radar screens fail to detect the telltale signs, which is all the more reason to tune into this important KPBS hour.

Lee Harvey's The Culture of Hate airs on KPBS, Sunday February 3 at 9:00PM.