

Encinitas Trilogy

Families and Flowers

Lines in the Sand

Edmund's Island



Resource
Guide

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The Encinitas Trilogy is a portrait of people who make a real difference in the life of their community. Each of these videos documents a moment in our shared social history, a fragment of our collective memory in a time of complex challenges and rapid change. **Edmund's Island** is a portrait of a homeless news hawker--- an angel to his customers. **Families and Flowers** is the story of growers whose nurseries (and way-of-life) are shadowed by their neighbors' million dollar homes. In **Lines in the Sand** environmental artist Kirk Van Allyn etches a sacred space, drawing a labyrinth in the sand.

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EDMUND'S ISLAND

Edmund's Island is a portrait of an "angel" working as an Encinitas, California news-hawker. Edmund is a homeless veteran. But you would never know it watching him dart in and out of traffic selling and giving away over one hundred papers each morning. Edmund's island is a traffic divider in the middle of Encinitas Blvd. In the minutes between traffic lights Edmund creates a community of face-to-face relationships. More than a vendor, Edmund is a catalyst for a caring community. Edmund tells his customers the news of the day, and people routinely give me him gifts of food, money, books and clothing. Edmund reciprocates offering a vision of joy and concern as the life of the community ebbs and flows past his island.

Purpose

Many people's images of homeless are comprised primarily of negative stereotypes. It's my hope that a positive image may be useful for community education and outreach. Humanizing our notion of homelessness can help create possibilities for positive change.

Curriculum suggestions

English classes in which literature concerned with contemporary stories will resonate with the tale of Edmund Thompson, a homeless news-vendor who brings much more than papers to our town. Social Studies classes especially those with community service learning units will benefit from this introduction to the topic.

Resources

Alpha Project See "About Homeless" link
<http://www.alphaproject.org/>

Interfaith Shelter Network
<http://www.interfaithshelter.org/>

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
<http://www.namisanidiego.org/>

Regional Task Force on the Homeless
<http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/rthf/home.html>

Discussion Questions

- Are there homeless people in Encinitas? Where? What do you know about them?
- Is this a national problem? Why? (Jobs, housing, substance abuse issues)
- What kinds of changes would we have to make in our society to eliminate homelessness?
- What can we do here in Encinitas? What kinds of services and shelters are available?
- What can we do individually or as a class to help?

Suggested Project

Students can create a questionnaire to learn what people commonly know about homeless in Encinitas. Researching suggested websites is the basis for a fact based report on the problem and potential solutions.

Epilogue

After Edmund's Island was completed, the Union-Tribune announced that they would no longer allow Edmund and other homeless newshawkers to sell the paper on the streets of Encinitas. In response numerous advocates for the homeless protest the Union-Tribune's decision. Despite coverage on television and in other local papers, the U-T refused to delay or reconsider its decision.

Concerned for Edmund in the community resulted in a job opportunity for him as a kitchen worker in an Encinitas home for seniors. But the low pay and expensive commute from downtown San Diego where Edmund still slept on the street, were too much. Edmund left his job and disappeared from Encinitas.

FAMILIES AND FLOWERS

Families and Flowers is a community portrait. For three-quarters of a century Japanese, German, and Mexican Americans have come to Encinitas to grow flowers, market blooms and raise families. This is a story of immigrants and entrepreneurs; a story of continuity and change; of self-sufficiency and adaptability.

The flower-growing industry in northern San Diego County is in many ways a microcosm of our rapidly changing society. Encinitas ---the once self-proclaimed "flower capital of the world"-- is facing daunting challenges. Economic growth and increased population are putting more demands on land, water and energy resources. New subdivisions continue to replace former growing-fields and greenhouses. Environmental concerns and regulations are seen by some as a threat to profitability. International competition is fierce. And capital costs and public concern may limit the potential of a biotech revolution in the flower fields.

Despite the challenges facing agriculture in an exploding suburban economy, third-generation, family-owned businesses continue to thrive in San Diego County, models of adaptability and perseverance.

Three families are profiled in the documentary:

Ecke Family

The Eckes are by far the largest, most successful and most well-known flower growers in San Diego County. Paul Ecke, Jr. was renowned for breeding and marketing poinsettias. His efforts made the brightly-colored plant virtually synonymous with the winter holiday season. Moving from field-growing to greenhouses freed up valuable real estate. The family has created a development corporation making available property for housing and commercial development. Major growing operations have been moved to Guatemala. Paul Ecke III lead an effort to build a biotech research facility on the Ecke property in Encinitas. .

Tayama/Kimura Family

Tamaya Greenhouses was founded by Tamie Tayama's father. Their family was interned during the Second World War..They are the largest growers of cut orchids in Southern California.. Each New Year's Day their flowers are featured in the Rose Parade.

Weidner Family

Evelyn Weidner and her daughter Mary are well-known for their pansies and begonias. Customers from miles around jockey with one another to among the first to pick each season's offering from their nurseries.

Curriculum suggestions

Social Studies units about California history and local history. (Families and Flowers not only documents local agricultural history and economic growth, but also touches on the experience of a local grower family interned with other Japanese Americans during World War II Students studying the local environment will also benefit from Families and Flowers.

Resources

Paul Ecke Ranch	http://www.pauleckepoinsettias.com/
Weidners' Gardens	http://www.weidners.com/
Tayama Greenhouses	http://www.tayama.com/
San Diego Baykeepers	http://www.sdbaykeeper.org/
United Farm Workers	http://www.ufw.org/

FAMILIES AND FLOWERS

Discussion Questions

- Do you know where nurseries are located in Encinitas? What kinds of flowers and plants are grown?
- How would Encinitas be different if the greenhouses are no longer part of our community?
- If it were up to you, would you prefer that Encinitas have more nurseries or more houses?
- Do you know anyone who works in a greenhouse? What are pay and working conditions like? Are there unions? Why or why not?
- How is biotechnology changing agriculture?

Suggested Projects

Students can conduct oral history interviews with older residents of Encinitas. With even a disposal camera, a poster presentation of words and images can help preserve memories of our city and its heritage.)

Epilogue

Since the completion of the documentary the Weidners continue to grow pansies and begonias for their loyal customers. Tamie Tayama Kimura and her husband Joe have retired. Their son Michael manages the orchid nursery. The Ecke family who created the wholesale Floral Trade Center in Carlsbad are planning to close the market and create a more profitable enterprise. The Tayamas and other flower wholesalers will be forced to relocate.

In Encinitas the Paul Ecke Ranch has not moved forward with their plans to build a biotechnology center. Instead they are seeking permission from the city to rezone their property and build 201 homes. This plan would amend the city's 1990 general plan in which the Eckes agreed to maintain their ranch in agriculture in perpetuity.

LINES IN THE SAND

Lines in the Sand is a lyrical portrait of art and meditation. Using simple handmade tools Encinitas artist Kirk Van Allyn creates public art on the pacific shore. Beginning at low tide, the process of creation is the work of art. Using the beach as his canvas, the artist paints with the elements ---- sand, surf and light. Van Allyn creates a labyrinth, a sacred space. His body dances through time, leaving patterns of beauty in the sand. The tide doesn't wait; its return offers a fresh canvas for the morrow.

Curriculum suggestions

Lines in the Sand can provide a catalyst and inspiration in art classes at all levels, and can serve as an example for student video classes learning about the potential for creating video documentaries of their own.

Resources

- Kirk Van Allyn' <http://www.kirkos.net/>
Learn about Labyrinths <http://www.labyrinthsociety.org/>
<http://www.earthsymbols.com/>
Environmental Art <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/gallery.htm>

Earth Art <http://www.usc.edu/schools/annenberg/asc/projects/comm544/library/styles/EarthArt.html>

Andy Goldsworthy <http://www.hainesgallery.com/AGOL.bio.html>
<http://www.filmforum.com/rivers.html>

LINES IN THE SAND

Discussion Questions

- What is environmental art? Earth art? How is this different from art found in museums and galleries?
- Do you know any artists in Encinitas? What kind of work do they do? Would they lend you a photo or slide of their work to share with the class?
- How does the addition of music change our experience of visual art?
- What is the difference between watching a video of Kirk's work and being on the beach while he is creating?

Suggested Projects

Students can adapt found objects to create simple tools for drawing patterns in the sand.

Use Google images to find pictures of natural objects (leaves, flowers, stones etc.). Use these images to create a layered collage.

See: http://www.hitchams.suffolk.sch.uk/ict_art/goldsworthy/