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**Gay Man's Brutal Murder Is Beginning of Astonishing Story of Family's Journey
From Anger to Forgiveness in "Beyond Hatred," Tuesday, June 30
On PBS's P.O.V. Series**

Acclaimed French Documentary Hauntingly Recounts a Hate Crime and Its Aftermath

"Beyond Hatred," a documentary about a murder victim's family struggling to heal, is an example of a film whose style doesn't merely suit its story but amplifies its meanings.

— Matt Zoller Seitz, *The New York Times*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Air

Date: **Tuesday, June 30, 2009** at 10 p.m. on PBS. (Check local listings.) The **P.O.V.** series (a cinema term for "point of view"), now in its 22nd year on PBS, is broadcast June through October, with primetime specials in the fall and winter.

Summary: In September 2002, three skinheads were roaming a park in Rheims, France, looking to "do an Arab," when they settled for a gay man instead. Twenty-nine-year-old François Chenu fought back fiercely, but he was beaten unconscious and thrown into a river, where he drowned. The acclaimed French vérité film **Beyond Hatred** is the story of the crime's aftermath; above all, of the Chenu family's brave and heartrending struggle to seek justice while trying to make sense of such pointless violence and unbearable loss. With remarkable dignity, they fight to transcend hatred and the inevitable desire for revenge.

Shot in direct-cinema style, with dark tones and long, evocative takes, **Beyond Hatred** forgoes third-party narration to let those who must deal with the crime's aftermath tell the story — the lawyers and prosecutors as they seek justice through the courts, those who knew the victim and his murderers, and even the father of one of the perpetrators. Most of all we hear from the Chenus: François' father, Jean-Paul, and mother, Marie-Cécile, and his two brothers and two sisters, as they try to reconstruct what happened and face the horror of François' last minutes.

Filmmaker

Statement: "I wanted to show how, in the course of the trial proceedings, the family changes," says director Olivier Meyrou. "The grief is gradually replaced by a desire to understand the murderers, who come from socially and culturally underprivileged families and have been exploited by right-wing, radical groups. The film testifies to the family's effort to forgive them. This is a humanistic film about a very complex theme — hatred and the need for justice and forgiveness to combat it."

Filmmaker Bio: **Olivier Meyrou, Director/Writer**

Olivier Meyrou was born in Anthony, France, in 1966. He studied literature and communication science before attending the film school Femis in Paris and later the Tisch School of Arts in New York. Since then he has made documentary films and worked as an assistant to operas. His credits include "My Own Little Gay America"

(1996), "Zelda" (1998), "Bye Bye Apartheid" (2004) and "Celebration," a documentary with Yves St Laurent (2007).

Related News: The Matthew Shepard Act was passed by the House of Representatives on April 29, 2009. The vote was 249 to 175. The measure would provide grants for state and local authorities to investigate and prosecute hate crimes, and it would empower the federal government to prosecute cases if states asked for Washington's help or were reluctant to exercise their own authority.

P.O.V. Web: The **Beyond Hatred** companion website, www.pbs.org/pov/beyondhatred, offers a streaming video trailer of the film, interview with filmmaker Olivier Meyrou; a list of related websites, organizations and books, downloadable discussion and facilitator guides, classroom activities and the following special features:

- **The Chenu Speak:** Read a transcript of the extraordinary letter that François' family wrote to one of his murderers, as well a transcript of what François' father read at the candlelight ceremony the family held in the park where François died.
- **Watching Beyond Hatred:** The murder of François Chenu, and his family's dignity in the face of overwhelming tragedy, can teach us all a great deal about compassion. Experts in the fields of law, restorative justice, hate crimes and more respond to the film by delving into the context of François' murder and explaining what viewers can do to increase tolerance.

Outreach: P.O.V. is working with public television stations and national and community-based groups across the country to foster community dialogue around the issues presented in the film. For a list of upcoming screening and discussion events for **Beyond Hatred**, go to: http://www.amdoc.org/outreach_news.php.

P.O.V. also works with nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow to develop a facilitation guide with discussion questions and background information to help event organizers carry out discussions around the film's content. Cari Ladd has created the lesson plan. Paul A. Bareño of the San Diego Public Library has created a multimedia resource list of related fiction and nonfiction books and videos that further explore the issues. The materials are available free of charge at: www.amdoc.org/outreach.

Festivals: Berlin International Film Festival, 2006 – Teddy Award, Best Documentary

Length: 86:46

Credits:

Director/Writer:	Olivier Meyrou
Executive Producer:	Benedicte Couvreur
Co-producers:	Christophe Girard, Katharina Marx
Cinematographers:	Florian Bouchet, Jean-Marc Bouzou, Emma Fernandez
Editor:	Cathie Dambel
Original Music:	François Eudes

Beyond Hatred is a production of Miss Luna Films and Hold Up Films in association with France 5 and France 2.

Pressroom: Visit P.O.V.'s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

P.O.V.: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and beginning its 22nd season on PBS in 2009, the award-winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today's best independent documentary filmmakers. Airing June through September with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought more than 275 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide, and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new

communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by PBS, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, The Educational Foundation of America, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, The September 11th Fund and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s *Diverse Voices Project* is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Special support provided by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET Los Angeles, WGBH Boston and Thirteen/WNET New York.

DVD REQUESTS: Please note that a broadcast version of this film is available upon request, as the film may be edited to comply with new FCC regulations.