



**ETERNALLY GRATEFUL** This was the first major book about the Dead; the authors were the first to be granted access to the Grateful Dead archives, which last week were formally donated to UC-Santa Cruz.

## Not Fade Away

The Grateful Dead archives come home to Santa Cruz

BY ART O'SULLIVAN

✓ **Y**ou have to wonder about the timing. It was just three days after Uncle Charley's Security Clampdown failed to suppress UCSC's annual 4/20 cannabis celebration. I was actually playing the Grateful Dead song "Eyes of the World" on the university's radio station, KZSC-FM (88.1), when I received news that a "new partnership" between UCSC and Grateful Dead Productions was about to be unveiled. The next day, band members and UCSC staff announced that the group's extensive paper archives will be placed permanently at UCSC's McHenry Library.

The Dead selected UCSC over bids by Berkeley (bassist Phil Lesh's alma mater) and Stanford (where Phil's son goes). What made little UCSC the best choice?

Its personality, apparently. At the press conference, guitarist Bob Weir called the school "neobohehman." McHenry Library's Special Collections curator Christine Bunting, who was instrumental in the successful campaign to woo the Dead, cites the school's and the band's "shared values," "community spirit" and the campus's music studies and programs dealing with social justice.

Santa Cruz represents independent spirit, the courage to question authority, etc., as does Berkeley. However, UCSC is less overtly political

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about it and seems more philosophical and contemplative than activist, like Berkeley. It's a posture not unlike that of the band, which preferred to observe the human condition rather than influence it ("I got no dime, but I got some time to hear your story").

UCSC is more playful and less intense than Berkeley or Stanford—or at least has that reputation ("Some folks up in treetops, just looking for their kites"). The Santa Cruz area has a good mix of people, the types the Dead sing about: wharf rats (Is there a Palo Alto Yacht Club?), cowboys (in Berkeley?), cosmic charlies, big boss men, estimated prophets. Visitors to the GD archives can kick back and relax on campus, wander through the woods, get inspired by nature.

Then there's the shared history. The band and the school both started in 1965 as committed innovators, and counterculture values fit both well. Through the 1970s and '80s, Deadheads flocked to Santa Cruz, which had blossomed into an open, evolved, herb-friendly community.

In fairness, the campus did not bring the counterculture to Santa Cruz. At the end of 1965, shortly after UCSC admitted its first students, author Ken Kesey, the Merry Pranksters and a band then known as the Warlocks (soon to become the Grateful Dead) conducted the first of the fabled "acid tests"—a ritual combining psychedelic drugs with experimental music and free-form dance—at a farmhouse near Santa Cruz, in neighboring Soquel. This was not a university event.

But the rising discontent that produced the youth counterculture in the 1960s did motivate contemporary educators to experiment with fun. In some ways, the goals of the campus paralleled those of the band. For instance, UCSC's intramural-based physical education program was based on the idea of "many participants, few spectators." As UCSC's founding chancellor, the late Dean McHenry once told me, "I'd rather have 4,000 participating than 11 playing and the others sitting on their asses." Chancellor McHenry's view parallels that of the Grateful Dead's late frontman Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, who used to challenge audiences to "Get yo' hands outa yo' pockets!" Since McKernan and McHenry clearly agreed about such things, where better to keep the Dead's memorabilia than the library bearing McHenry's name?

The defiant triumph of this year's banned 4/20 celebration proves that Santa Cruz is still a mecca for the counterculture. The Grateful Dead's decision to stash their stuff here will make that status permanent.

Art O'Sullivan is a UCSC alumnus and the host of the 'Golden Road' program, featuring Grateful Dead for nonbelievers, on KZSC-FM Santa Cruz (88.1), Wednesdays 4-6pm.