

# Hate Crime in Texas

by Tommy Stovall

**H**D vs. film: the dilemma I found myself in when I set out to shoot my first feature, *Hate Crime*. Coming from a video background with zero film experience, I would remain in my video comfort zone shooting HD, especially since the latest in high definition technology had closed the quality gap between the two mediums. And, it was cheaper, faster, and required less crew. Or so I thought...

My research on the merits of HD brought about a barrage of confusing information and conflicting "expert" opinions. Suddenly in early preproduction, I had cold feet, because I learned that, "It's easy to screw up HD, unless you really know what you're doing."

On the verge of abandoning HD, I came across Texas Highdef ([texashighdef.com](http://texashighdef.com)), a company launched in the Austin area by cinematographer Ian Ellis. After talking with Ian and seeing his work, it didn't take long for me to conclude that he did, in fact, know what

he was doing. With Ian onboard as DP, my excitement for HD was restored.

With a 21-day schedule on location in Dallas, we shot *Hate Crime* with Ian's Sony F900/3 package. Shooting in HD was a wonderful experience and I valued the flexibility it afforded us. Our ability to keep the camera rolling during takes was particularly appreciated by our seasoned all-star cast.

We ended up with a gorgeous finished product, one that continually has audience members astonished that we didn't shoot it on film. After success on the indie film festival circuit, we transferred the movie to 35mm with great results for a 2006 multi-city theatrical run. A controversial and entertaining crime thriller that provokes thought and discussion, *Hate Crime* has been compared by film critics to *In The Bedroom* and the Oscar-winning *Crash*. For more visit [HateCrimeMovie.com](http://HateCrimeMovie.com). **HD**

*Tommy Stovall is a writer/director/producer with his company Pasidg Productions, Inc.*



Above: DP Ian Ellis with the Sony HDW-F900.

Left: Kathleen (Lin Shaye) confronts the neighborhood trouble-maker.

Photos by Cas Dodgen for Pasidg Productions, Inc.