

Preacher reflects on years of campus ministry

By Dawn Hellums
The Battalion



DAWN HELLUMS/The Battalion

In 1954, Bob Davidson became the first campus minister. Today, he still serves as a campus minister, as well as head of Aggies for Christ and a preacher for A&M Church of Christ.

seven years. But again, he couldn't stay away from the Aggies for long. "I came back here in 1970 and I'm doing the same thing I had done before," Davidson said. "I love working with university students; they keep me young."

Apparently so. Davidson is a competitive handball player, and according to AFC member Brian Payne, he can beat anybody at any sport. "Whether it's basketball, horseshoes, domi-

noes, or cards he'll beat you," said Payne, an Agricultural Economics major. "He's a fierce competitor."

The AFCs do a number of things for the community. They get together on Monday nights and sing at old age homes, and also hold a devotional every Tuesday night in front of the Academic Building. But they devote most of their time taking trips to influence others, which Davidson said is a good recruiting device for A&M.

Professor prepares to teach U.S. history in Germany

By Timm Doolen
The Battalion

Dr. Arnold Kramer is a unique history professor. He teaches German history to American students and next year will be teaching American history to German students.

He will be teaching U.S. history at the University of Tubingen in Germany next year on a Senior Fulbright Fellowship.

After 19 years as a professor of history at A&M, this will be his first full year teaching somewhere other than A&M.

"I've been here longer than many of my students have been alive," Kramer said.

At A&M, he specializes in German history, specifically during the two world wars. His special topics course, Nazi Germany, is a highly desired class within the curriculum.

Although the topic seems very specific, Kramer views it as a good case study to examine deviant behavior, economics, militarism, leadership, education and propaganda.

"It's a popular course because it has so many different kinds of appeals," he said. "People are drawn by the monstrosity of it all. The Nazis were so monstrously evil."

Many people are surprised

by Kramer's specialty, believing he may be too sympathetic to his subject.

"In many ways I feel like a cancer specialist," he said. "You don't have to like the people you're studying, you just have to find out what makes them tick."

"The problem is not in that 12-year period - it's a sickness in people. Could it happen again? We need to study it so it doesn't happen again. The people who produced the greatest philosophers and musicians also produced such awful people."

That period of history has a peculiar staying power and maybe will never be forgotten, especially if one looks at tabloid journalism stories.

"Hitler or Elvis is spotted at a Whataburger every single week," he said. "It's the type of subject that never dies."

How true. Posted outside his office are the covers of some tabloid headlines: "Hitler Captured! Fuhrer was on his way to help Saddam Hussein!" "I'm Pregnant with Hitler's Baby" and "Hitler's Secret Son Found."

While studying that period of history in Germany, Kramer became interested in how Americans treated captured

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CAMAC production offers insight on barrio experience

By Timm Doolen
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"La Mano," a play by the Latino Theatre Group, an offshoot of MSC CAMAC, presented insights into some of the struggles of people in the barrio. The locally written play was met by a standing ovation Tuesday night, an unusual accolade for local dramas.

"La Mano" (the hand) attempts to show the problems of a group of Latinos living in the barrio and one man's anger as a result of his downtrodden existence.

The barrio is the bad part of town, be it San Antonio, Los Angeles, San Diego - it could be any city. As one of the characters says, it's the part of town they warn you about in the battery commercials - don't get stuck with a dead battery in the Mexican part of town.

The play opens with the main character, Johnny Pachuco (Abel Herrero), in prison remembering life in the barrio. Pachuco's brother Jesus (Antonio

Gonzalez) was in the Vietnam war and was shot in the head. Because of that he is dependent on his brother, and also has visions of saints.

One of those saints, La Raza (translated "the race" or "the people"), oversees the barrio and serves as both a narrator and comedian.

A lady in the barrio also has a vision in her tortilla, of mother Mary. The mayor comes to investigate both people and their visions, to see how he can take advantage of the political opportunities.

In the mind of the mayor, who is also referred to as Diablo, religion and idols are useful for keeping the people down.

The more radical members of the group realize this and want to break free from the traditional ways of thinking. As the character Chata says, "We need justice now, not in the clouds."

About halfway through the play the narrative gets hazy and the play is transformed into an abstract tirade against prejudice and members of the Latino so-

ciety who make good off their own people's misfortunes.

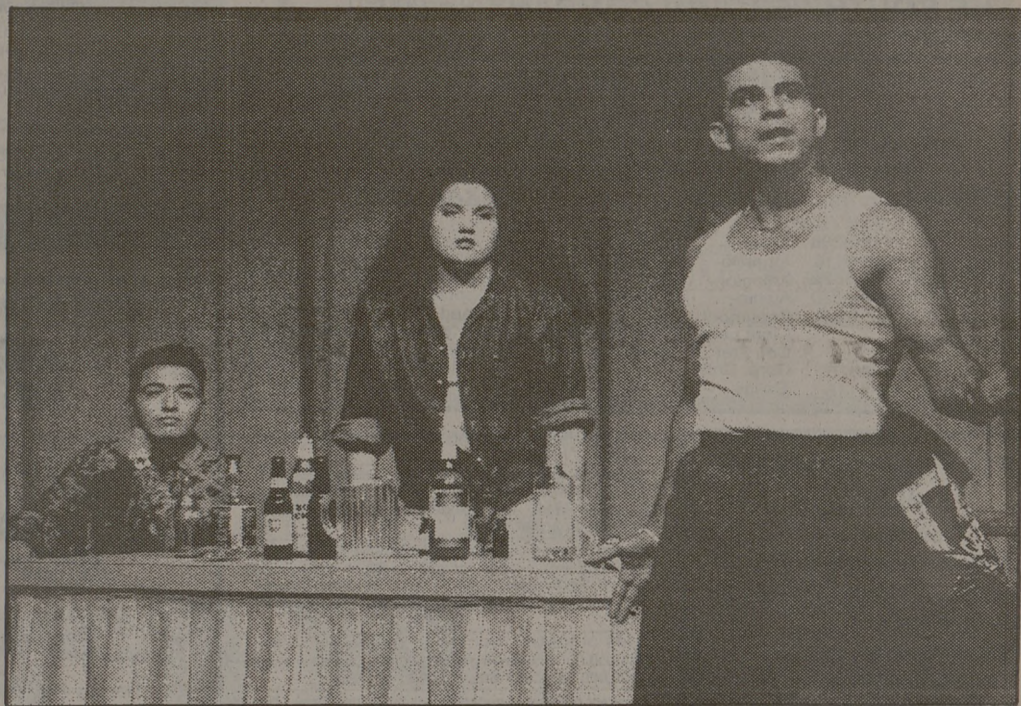
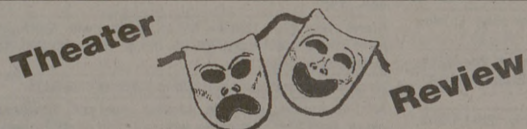
The performances were refreshingly well done, especially Herrero and Chris Alvarado as La Raza, in a story with several similarities to "Boyz 'N' the Hood."

The comic touches provided a much needed relief from the heavy dramatic portions, and were the best parts of the play. The audience obviously enjoyed those as well.

Writer-director Robert Villareal, an A&M student, did a good job of translating life in the barrio into a viable drama, on an obviously limited budget.

Sometimes the symbolism is a little heavy-handed and obvious, but overall the play had a lot of merit, especially from such a young creator as Villareal.

"La Mano" didn't provide all the answers to the struggles of the people in the barrio, and it couldn't possibly have done that. But it did offer a look into the problems of a society unbeknownst to many at A&M.



Chad (left, Robert Navarete) and Charity (Patricia Gonzalez) listen to Johnny (Abel Herrero) explain his struggle living in the barrio in the play "La Mano."

RANDALL NICHOLS/The Battalion

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