

Stick



By Alvaro Play explores what American Dream means to Mexican-Americans

DALLAS (AP) — On its surface, "Santos & Santos" is the story about an El Paso, Texas law firm gone bad, a sordid tale of sex, drugs and violence.

The play, which makes its world premiere at the Dallas Theater Center Thursday, is loosely based on the events leading to the murder of U.S. District Judge John H. Wood and the Chagra brothers — El Paso attorneys linked to the plots to kill him.

"It was just a springboard," insists Solis, an El Paso native now living in San Francisco. "It's not about the Chagra family. It's my story."

Solis' story is one of internal and external conflict of Mexican-Americans living in the United States. Solis said that, as the son of Mexican immigrants, the story is something he can relate to.

The conflict between a history and culture rooted in Mexico and a lifestyle rooted in the United States is what tears at the play's protagonist, attorney Tomas Santos. When he finds out about his prominent family's drug-running ways, his loyalties are put to a stern test.

He must choose between his corrupt kindred or his corrupt legal system. He loves both, but both eventually fail the self-righteous Tomas.

Solis said it's a microcosm of the American ideal gone haywire.

"The basic American dream is success — success at any cost," he said. "America asks you to give up (cultural) things, yet it absorbs cultures as well."

That hybrid experience is what forms the precipice for Mexican-Americans, Solis says. The battle between Mexican and American sensibilities for Tomas Santos coincides with the literal battles that take place on the stage.

Solis said the basic difference between the cultures is their attitudes toward how the world works. The Mexican view is one of fate, he says, and God's will dictates what happens. He said that tragic attitude is different from the American comic viewpoint.

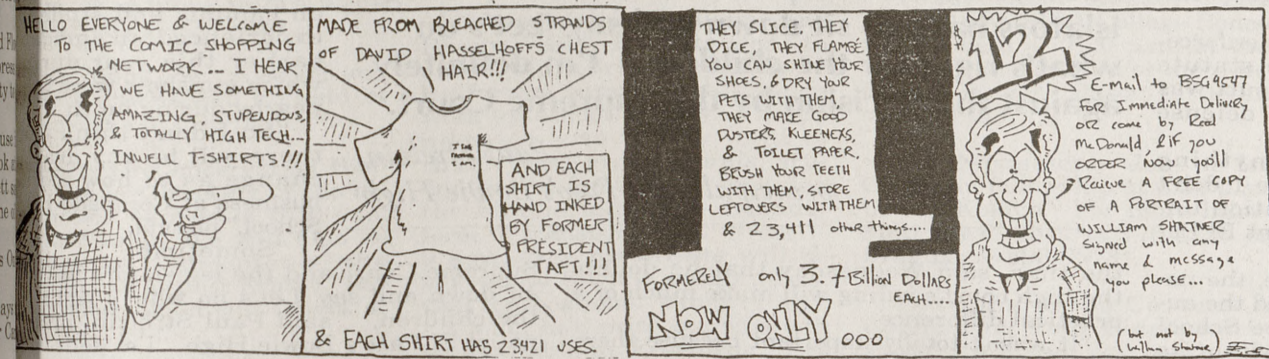
"Americans see things governed by fortune, not fate," he said. "If you're smart, clever and try hard enough, you can achieve anything. Americans are suckers for happy endings."

Neither "Santos & Santos" nor the Chagras' saga send the audience away smiling.

There aren't many cheers in "Santos & Santos," but that's typical for the 37-year-old Solis. He said he'd rather paint his characters with a negative brush.

"They're real people," Solis said when asked if his corrupt characters are difficult to fashion. "They're all around you. It's easy."

THE INKWELL



BY BRAD

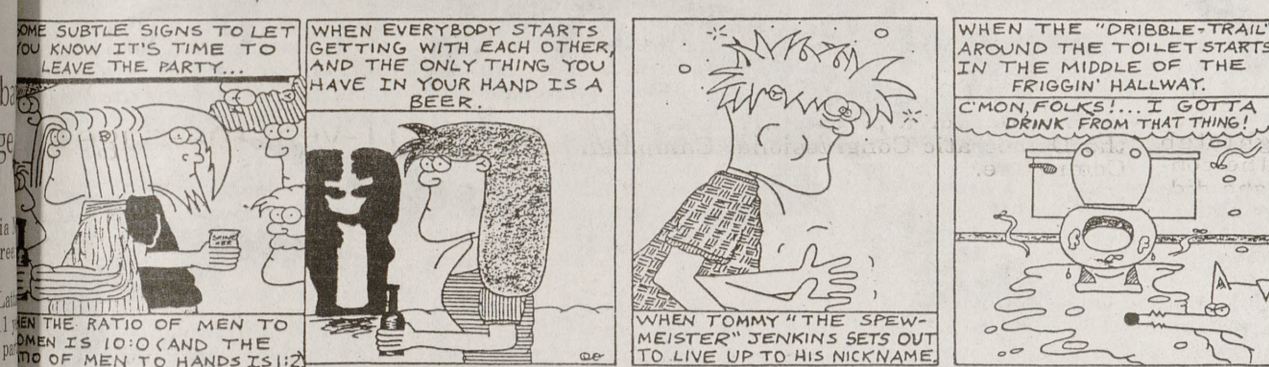
ADVENTURES IN AGGIELAND

BY GREG



Sketch

By Quatro



WEATHER

Weather forecast for Today, Friday, Saturday, and Friday Night, including temperature and wind information.

BCS / TAMU CONFERENCE: IMPROVING RACE RELATIONS

PART A: "What Can We Learn From Each Other?" When: Thursday, April 27, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Where: Memorial Student Center (MSC), Rm. 224

PART B: B/CS Town Meeting "Race Relations in Our Public Schools" When: Thursday, April 27, from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. Where: College Station Conference Center

Outcomes: (1) To encourage all participants to assume ownership of the issues and challenges identified at the meetings. (2) To initiate, continue or expand upon efforts and strategies to implement effective change. (3) To communicate and work extensively across boundaries.

Historical Reflections on THE HOLOCAUST

Dr. Philip Cohen, M.D., Lecturer Authority on the Holocaust in Eastern Europe Serbia at War With History The Concealed World War II Record

Dr. James Olsen, Lecturer Professor of History, Sam Houston State University

Dr. Arnold Krammer, Moderator Professor, Department of History, Texas A&M University

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