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Texas on list of worldwide rights violators

LONDON (AP) — The execution of a Texas man for a murder committed when he was 17 was among the human rights violations that have been reported to Amnesty International for last year.

The group said Wednesday it received reports alleging human rights abuses in 128 nations last year, ranging from unarmed civilians massacred in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka to conscientious objectors jailed in Western Europe.

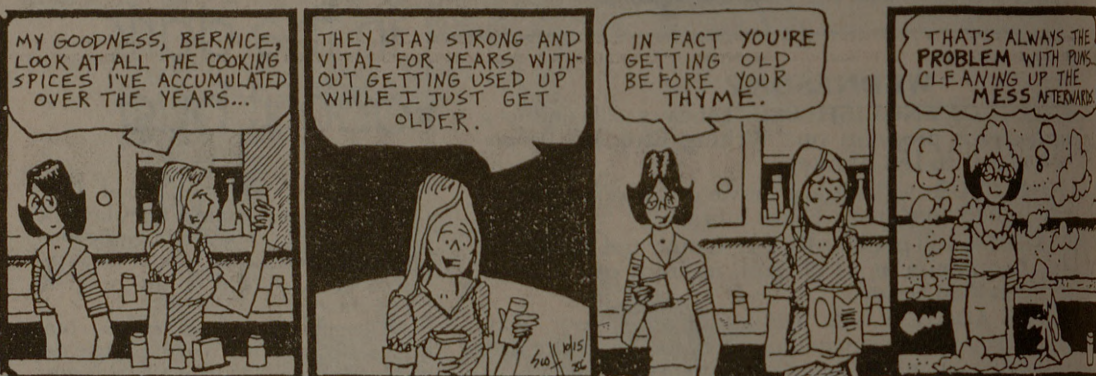
The United States, where 18 convicted murderers were executed last year, was cited for the Texas case and because Georgia executed a man who was a murder accomplice.

The report also protested executions by lethal injection in the United States, saying the method "appeared to cause prolonged suffering."

In its annual worldwide survey, the London-based rights group assailed the use of arbitrary arrest to suppress political dissent, execution, torture and unfair trial.

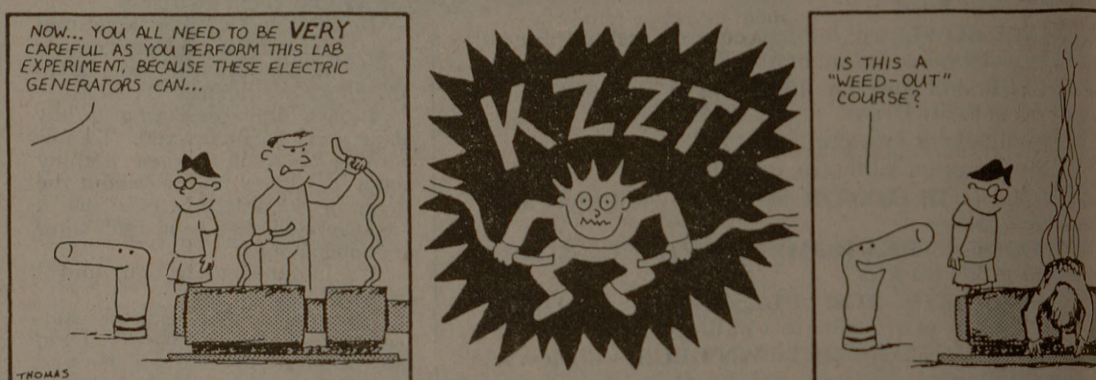
The 386-page report cited purported abuses in 80 percent of the 159 U.N. nations during 1985.

Warped



by Scott McCulloch

Waldo



by Kevin Thomas

Movies 'involving, not just entertaining'

Society takes artistic view of film

By Matt Diedrich
Reporter

Does the phrase "art film" conjure up images of a pretentious, boring movie for intellectuals? Would it surprise you if someone called "Easy Rider," a movie about a pair of cocaine-dealing hippies on motorcycles, an art film?

"Easy Rider" was the first film shown this semester by Texas A&M's Student Art Film Society, a group that screens movies every other Thursday night in the Blocker Building at no charge to the general public.

"You don't go to the film to escape as much as you go to the film to learn. (Art films) contain real situations and real human problems, and they attempt to address issues that exist outside the theater."

— Richard Storm, president of the Student Art Film Society

The aim of the film society is to bring films to campus that might not otherwise be shown here, says Richard Storm, the president of the society.

The eight films screened in a semester are selected from a pool of suggestions made by film society members, so the main criterion for what will be shown is what the members want to see, Storm says.

For Storm, an art film is not as much entertainment as it is involvement, he says.

"You don't go to the film to escape as much as you go to the film to learn," he says. "(Art films) contain real situations and real human problems, and they attempt to address issues that exist outside the theater."

For Wesley Dean, the film society's vice president, the intent of the filmmaker is an important consideration.

"An art film can be practically anything in which the director had the intention of produc-

ing a piece of art — as opposed to a money-making venture," he says.

Dr. Larry Hickman, associate professor of philosophy and adviser to the film society, says the label "art film" is a loose designation indicating there's something of value in the film beyond mere entertainment.

"(An art film) explores the human condition in a way that causes us to think more critically and more seriously about who we are and what we are," he says.

Films of Orson Welles, such as "Citizen Kane" and "Touch of Evil," fall into this category, Hickman says.

Hickman says that in the case of "Easy Rider," the story of two hippies driving across America becomes an exploration of the American hero and a search for American values.

Storm says the selections made by group members tend to reflect their auteurist tastes. The auteur theory is the view that the director is the true author — the primary creative force — of a film.

"They believe in the power of the director and in the director's responsibility for a work," Storm says. "They'll (often) suggest films not by title but by director."

Storm said one film that many group members have recommended this semester is "Brazil," director Terry Gilliam's satiric vision of a future society. Gilliam's direction is what makes the film special, Storm says.

"It reminded me a little bit of Welles' 'Citizen Kane' — the scenery in front of the camera, the types of perspective and the claustrophobic situations that were created," he says. "Just visually, without the sound even, the film would be exciting."

Dr. Harriette Andreadis, associate professor of English and occasional guest speaker at film society screenings, says another important aspect of the art film is that it explores the technical possibilities of filmmaking.

"Certain filmmakers... explored the possibilities of their medium and thereby pushed the medium beyond where it was at the time, creating possibilities for the future," she says.

Hickman said a recent example of this is independent filmmaker Jim Jarmusch's "Stranger Than Paradise."

"'Stranger Than Paradise' introduced us to a

new way of looking at films," he says. "It's a lot of chances."

The film is composed of about 50 short shots, or shots that normally establish the beginning of a scene. But there is no editing within a scene and there are no close-ups. This technique keeps production costs down without compromising the quality of the subject matter, Hickman says.

"It's a brilliant solution to the problem of making a good, quality low-budget film," he says. "It's an innovative solution to a cinematic problem and it creates a visual delight as a result."

"(An art film) explores the human condition in a way that causes us to think more critically and more seriously about who we are and what we are."

— Dr. Larry Hickman, adviser to the Student Art Film Society.

Andreadis says some art films achieve success because they are the first of their kind. She cited "Five Easy Pieces," which the film society showed last spring, as an example of an art film that was the first to deal with a profound subject.

"(Five Easy Pieces) was the first of the movies in this country to deal with the alienation of a young man; his alienation from his family, his inability to love and his inability to cope with the American life," she says. "That movie was really the first to broach that subject."

Student Art Film Society screenings usually include a short introduction by a guest speaker.

Hickman said the introduction usually serves to place the film in its context and to give the audience hints about what to look for.

"The assumption of people in the Student Art Film Society is that you don't just look at the film and see everything there is to see on the screen," he says. "That's why there are film societies that one sees over and over again."

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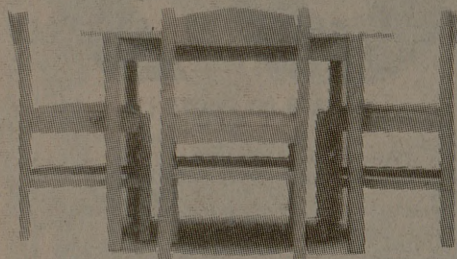
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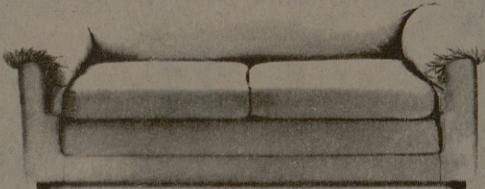
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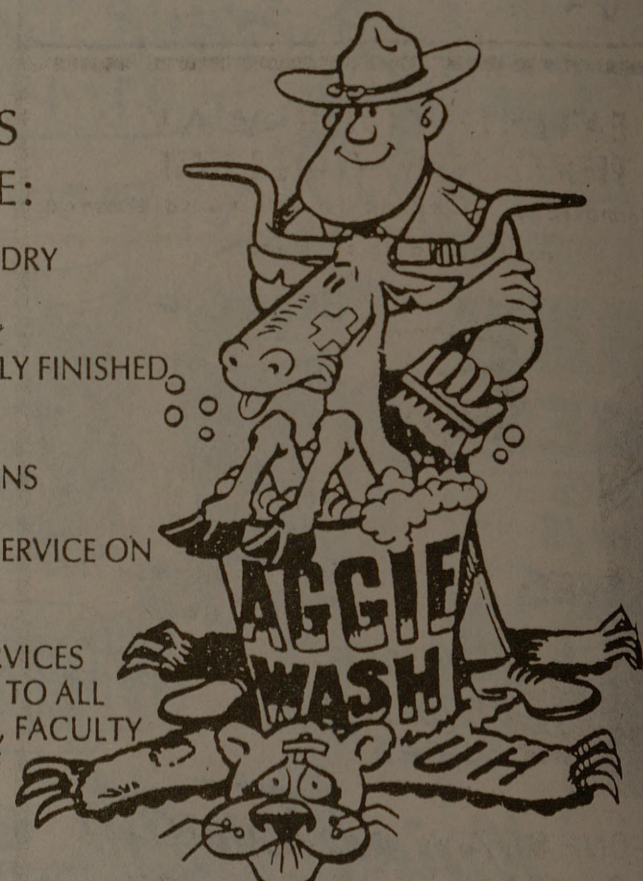
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