

Drug report finds heroin use lower in Eugene than expected

The University's Drug Information Center (DIC) has released a report indicating that while the use of marijuana, LSD and cocaine are widespread in the Eugene-Springfield area, the use of heroin is very slight.

The report's findings were made public by DIC Director Mark Miller at a Monday press conference.

The report found that many buyers in the area are receiving substances that are misrepresented by the seller. The chemical analysis, which was performed over the last nine months, was done by the PharmChem Laboratories in Palo Alto, Calif.

Miller estimated that the number of regular users of heroin in the area is between 50 and 100. He commented that this figure is much lower than previous estimates issued by the Eugene Police Department and White Bird Clinic.

Cocaine usage is increasing, however. Miller noted that the center had received 31 samples of substances that were thought to be cocaine. Of these, about three-fourths were sent in within the last three months.

Noting that cocaine costs from \$50 to \$75 per gram, Miller pointed out that the number of samples sent in indicates widespread availability.

Miller believes that area users are switching to cocaine from amphetamines, to obtain a more pleasant high with fewer side effects.

He added that about half of the samples that the center has received were not pure cocaine. The drug was frequently in a mixture with local anesthetics such as procain and xylocaine.

Not just cocaine samples are lacking in purity. Many other drugs, when analyzed, turned out to be other than what the buyers thought they were.

The report revealed that nearly half the samples sent in as psilocybin and mescaline turned out to be LSD.

And seven out of nine samples purported to be synthetic THC (the active compound in marijuana) were found to be PCP, an animal tranquilizer with potentially harmful side-effects. Miller listed paranoia, glaucoma, high blood pressure and delusions as among the effects of the chemical.

Marijuana is still the most widely used drug in the Eugene-Springfield area, according to Don McLoud, assistant director of the DIC.

In addition, McLoud stated that Eugene has one of the highest per capita rates for marijuana usage in the state.

Comparing the relative usage rates by drug, McLoud estimated that for every ten persons who smoke marijuana, there is one person who regularly uses LSD. For every ten LSD users, he continued, there is one regular user of cocaine, and that for every ten cocaine users, there exists one user of heroin.

The report, which may be obtained from the DIC office in the EMU, was cited by Miller as the first such study in the state, and only the second in the nation.

He said that the only way to compile a valid picture of local drug usage patterns is through studies like the drug analysis project.

Special committee begins work on bill to lower age of majority

By NAN HENDERSON
Of the Emerald

SALEM (Special) — The legislative Special Joint Committee on Alcohol and Drugs — created this session to deal with those controversial topics — began work Monday on a bill (HB 3167) which lowers the age of majority to 18.

At the end of the two-hour work session which followed a previous lengthy hearing on the subject, it was apparent that the committee will spend several more hours discussing and possibly amending the bill.

The committee took no action on the bill Monday.

Questions were raised during the meeting about a section which states all persons shall be considered to have reached the age of majority upon marriage and sections which provide no person not a minor can be admitted or retained in reformatories such as MacLaren and Hillcrest.

The committee agreed to solicit additional

testimony on those sections of the bill before taking any action on the measure.

No indication was given as to whether the committee will attempt to substitute the age 19 in the section of the bill lowering the drinking age to 18.

The drinking age question is sure to cause the most conflict in the committee and on the House and Senate floors.

The bill, however, also lowers the age for numerous other "adult" rights, including entering into contracts, forming corporations, voting in school district elections and no longer falling under parental authority.

Committee co-chairer, Rep. Stephen Kafoury (D-Portland) continued Monday to urge the committee to lower the age for all adult rights to 18 or to reject lowering the age for any right.

"I have a philosophical commitment to either making a statement that a person is mature at 18 or saying a person is mature at 21," Kafoury said.

He indicated that he hopes the committee can take final action on the measure in a week.

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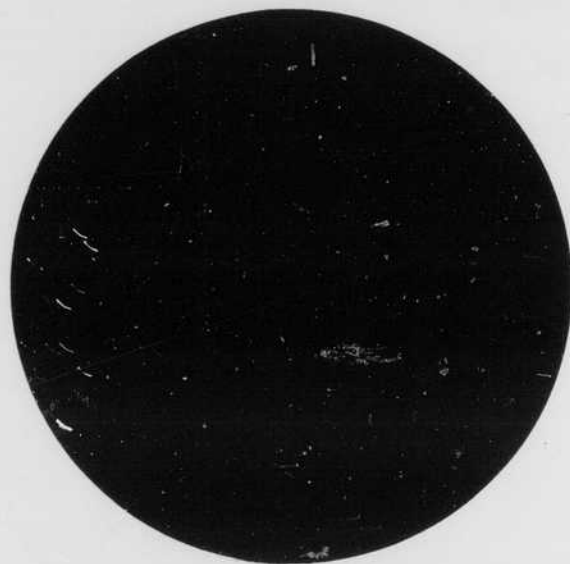
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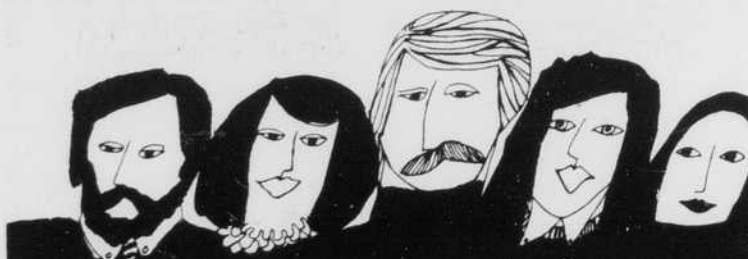
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