

Budget cuts threaten Hult Center

OUR OPINION: The Eugene City Council should find a way to keep the Hult Center alive

The Eugene City Council has quite a challenge ahead of it. With Measure 47 creating the need for cutbacks, the council has to decide which programs can be cut and which can be saved. And no matter what it chooses, some people are going to be left unhappy.

So where will the \$9 million in cuts that will be needed to balance the effects of Measure 47 come from? Obviously, programs like public safety are not going to be seriously affected. The police and fire department are simply too important to cut funds from. Instead it will be the "non-essential" programs that will feel the brunt of the cuts.

CONTACT US

What do you think? Write us a letter expressing your opinion or E-mail us at ode@oregon.uoregon.edu. Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

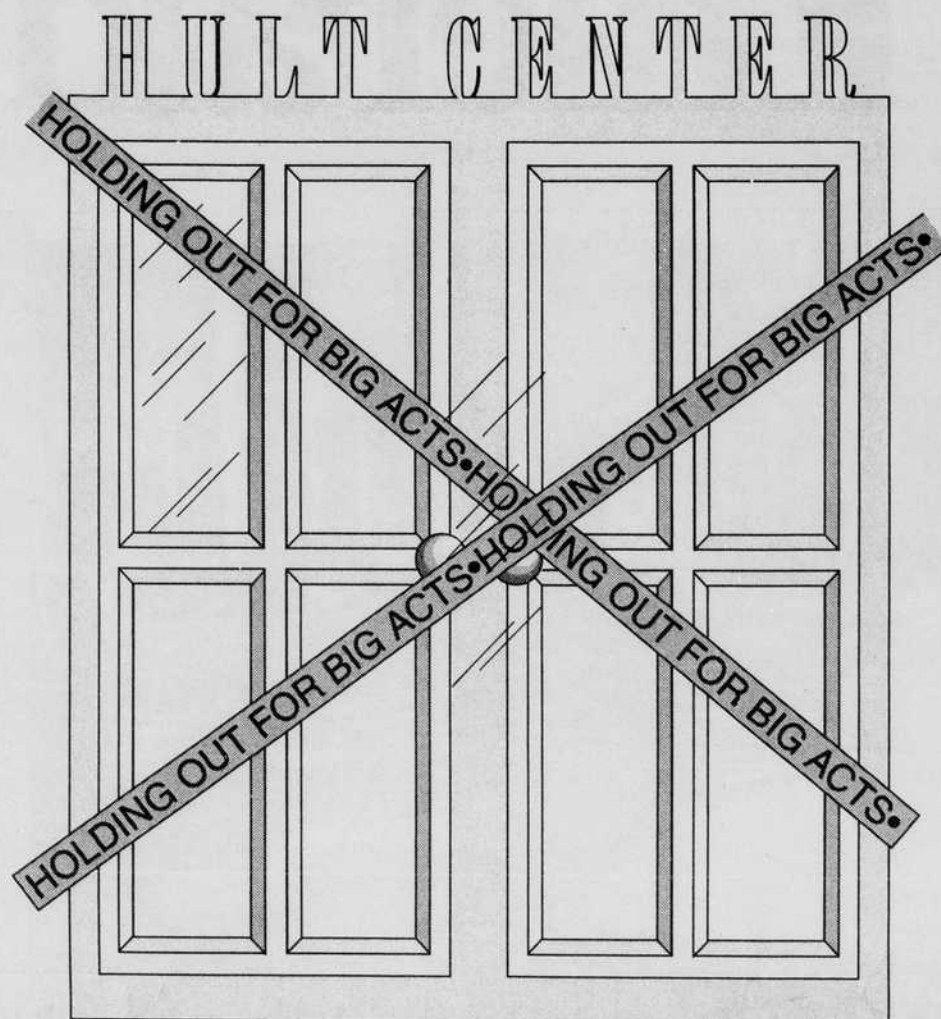
Non-essential, in this case, may very well be synonymous with recreational programs. Recreational programs, though they provide a lot of desired entertainment, are not completely necessary in running a city. So when the council

drew up three proposed cutback plans, it wasn't surprising to find that all three included cutting back on recreational services.

What is somewhat surprising is that all three plans include cutting funding to the Hult Center. While it is understandable that, in the wake of Measure 47, some cuts would have to be made to places like the Hult Center, the fact that every plan includes cutting the Hult Center's funds is disappointing.

The Hult Center provides a wide range of entertainment and culture for the city of Eugene. From big acts like Sheryl Crow and the Eugene Symphony to smaller local acts, the Hult Center is an accessible and cheap entertainment center for Eugene.

However, if the Hult Center's funding is cut like the council plans, it will be forced to turn down all but the most profitable acts. Without funding from the city, the Hult Center simply won't be able to afford



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

staying open for acts that don't make big money.

That means no more local or smaller bands or comedy acts would appear at the Hult Center, only big-named bands that draw the big bucks. And because most of the big acts that come to Eugene choose to go to either Autzen or the EMU, the Hult Center could all but shut down.

That means a serious loss to the cultural atmosphere of Eugene. The fact that there is a place where students can watch musical acts for a very reasonable price is a major plus for Eugene's night life. With the Hult Center becoming a "big act or nothing" facility, that element of Eugene's night scene will be eliminated, and everyone who enjoys that element of Eugene will suffer.

While the function of the Hult Center is not vital to the survival of the city of Eugene, it does provide a valuable cultural service. If the Eugene City Council is forced

to make cuts in the Hult Center's funding, they should first look into alternate ways to fund it.

At the very least, the council should at least consider cutback plans that don't eliminate funding to the Hult Center. Recreational services may be the easiest to cut when money is tight, but there still should be a concerted effort to preserve the cultural diversity of Eugene.

After all, recreational facilities like the Hult Center help attract people to Eugene in the first place. So, though they may be seen by many as an economic cost the city can do without, in many ways they are an investment, attracting additional revenue to the city. In any case, the Hult Center provides an element of entertainment that would be missed if it was eliminated.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.

Overheard

"I love Mac Court. I will fight until my dying days that I'm here to protect Mac Court and its integrity because there's a lot of emotion that I've left out on that floor."

New University Men's Basketball Coach Ernie Kent, on his new home arena, in the Emerald.

"It was improbable she would get pregnant. You've got to stop believing in coincidence when you have as many things come together as we have."

Jeff Nelson-Folkerson referring to his wife, who became pregnant with quintuplets through in-vitro fertilization.

"Never again war!"

Pope John Paul II, speaking to the war-torn citizens of Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"This is a medical facility. This is not a place to party."

Cherrie Lovett, director of the Ukiah, Calif. Cannabis Club, which provides marijuana to terminally ill patients.

"Several of [the people] were rather mystified, but Paul really enjoyed himself. It certainly brought back memories for him."

Geoff Baker, Paul McCartney's agent, on his client's spontaneous rooftop concert in London on April 11.

"Those cult people started arguing with my friend. They also made weird chirping noises. They were really weird."

Tabby Runnels, a participant in the annual UFO Conference in Eureka Springs, AK, explaining the arrival of Heaven's Gate members to the convention.

"This is the first time I've won anything."

Josh Shreve, a freshman at West Virginia University, after winning one of five \$2,000 school scholarships based entirely on luck.

"As much as people want to call us role models, we're actors first. It's up to individuals to decide whether to smoke."

Winona Ryder, after being criticized for taking too many "smoker" roles.

LETTERS

Freedom of choice

Nicole Kristal's juxtaposition of religion and opiates was offensive and hypocritical. By viewing all religions under a negative lens, she demonstrates disrespect for anyone who chooses to think differently.

She clearly supports the freedom to live, think, and choose for oneself. But apparently this doesn't apply to religious belief. Am I missing something? If freedom of choice is precious, then why is choosing a religion any different from any other choice?

Nicole's evidence is clearly lacking. Her editorial relies on stereotypes and Freudian analysis which result in a biased argument. She's peddling a contradictory and judgmental belief system. Sound familiar?

Furthermore, Miss Kristal fails to recognize her own inability to come up with a unique thought. Her editorial reflects the news coverage on the local and national levels. Like others, she reports the suicides as a tragedy.

I consider the following tragedies:

- Over three million children were reported victims of child abuse in 1994; 1,271 died.

- In 1995 there was a forced rape every five minutes.

- About six million women are attacked by their partners every year.

When people take their own life it is not a tragedy nor worthy of front page coverage for more than a day. A choice was made and they are dead. And what does Miss Kristal say of choices? "I don't think there is a cause that's worth surrendering your right to think for yourself."

I certainly won't be trading in my freedom anytime soon. Will you?

Ryan R. Phay
Computer Science

Column misinterprets Bible

It saddens me to read your column ["Religion still the opiate of the masses," Nicole

Kristal, ODE, April 11] in the Emerald. I feel prosecuted in a sense by your words simply because I am Catholic. I hope that you do not regularly prejudge everyone in the same way you have just judged Catholics.

Your column correctly points out the dangers of "cults". However, let me please point out what I believe to be an error on your part with regards to the Bible.

First, the Bible does not teach anyone to kill anyone. Jesus Christ taught love. To teach means to cause to know a subject. Your column says that the Bible "teaches". This must mean that those who read the Bible will learn the same thing that the followers of Marshall Applewhite learned. If this is true why are we not all dead?

Second, I have read the Bible (I assume that you have also read the entire Bible in order to make the claims that you have) and nowhere do I find an instruction or commandment to "deprive (myself) of natural sexual desire." Instead, I find instructions

and commandments that I should love and honor my wife.

Third, nowhere in Bible have I read that I should "dwell in unnecessary shame and guilt." Instead, I read that I should rejoice in the love of the Lord our God.

Finally, I read in the Bible that many people will come to this earth claiming to be or know God. Jesus Christ warned of such people. I pray and hope that people will not follow the likes of Marshall Applewhite. Jesus Christ taught us how to protect ourselves from such horrors.

Perhaps this short note will lead you to understand Catholicism and Christianity. A cult has many definitions. Webster's lists five very different definitions. However, a cult can only be formed by people, as you said, who thought for themselves that they should join the cult.

Pete Crabb
Graduate Student