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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Institutions must adjust to changes in culture

I have read with mixed feelings the letters from culture proponents and those with vested interests in Orchestra London. My observation is they are pushing the feelings of the previous generation.

What is culture? The dictionary says "enlightenment and excellence of taste acquired by intellectual and aesthetic training." Taste is defined as "individual preference." Culture changes with each generation. Today, our culture includes the Backstreet Boys, N'Sync, Dion, Morissette and movie stars such as Julia Roberts, along with health clubs, recreation and exercise.

Orchestra London says membership is declining. Churches face the same cultural problem. Some have tried to cope by locking the organ and bringing in keyboards and guitars. I notice even Anne Murray is trying to change her style to adapt to a new culture.

The previous generation's letter writers say prospective citizens of London require that there be an Orchestra London. I think, however, the priorities of current and prospective citizens are education, recreation facilities and youth programs. A neat, clean and safe city is a high priority. The orchestra would be an important factor if we were promoting London as a retirement community.

In my opinion, the city should give limited support to Orchestra London. But I don't think we should go overboard to maintain the present status of an institution to make up for a decline in its number of members. There still is good entertainment available, such as the Phil Murphy Concert Band, a group of 60-70 excellent local musicians who play for their own fulfillment and present crowd-pleasing performances.

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