



GAY BASHING

Can one escape the dreaded corporate menace?

by Eugene Tramaglino
YELLIN' REBEL

It occurs to me that the smaller incarnations of particular businesses are on their way out. Car dealerships, for example. Here in Las Vegas, we have a car dealer known as Fletcher Jones, and he owns a few lots here. Fletcher Jones Toyota. Fletcher Jones Hyundai. Fletcher Jones Suzuki. Fletcher Jones Mitsubishi. Fletcher Jones Used Cars. *Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera—ad nauseam.* Or burger joints. There are McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, but when was the last time you had a What-A-Burger? Does anyone even remember What-A-Burger? If this firm is still around, I haven't seen their stands. (Actually, I only know about What-A-Burger because I use to catch a bus in front of one.) You could probably tell me about a few pet industries of your own that are in this consolidation phase. Hospitals. Not Television. Financial houses. Copier manufacturers. Or movie theaters.

Recently, in June of 1989, Syufy Theaters closed down the Cine Boulevard 2, *né* the Boulevard Twin. I was driving down Maryland Parkway, thinking all was well with the world, and saw that there were no movies advertised on the marquee. Well, I turned around, drove into the parking lot, and toolled up to the lobby windows.

Nothing.

No posters, no candy, no signs, no posters, no video games... nothing at all. Needless to say, this shocked me. Maybe I've been living a sheltered life, but I've never seen a theater closed down before. I've seen plenty open up, but none... dead. That's right, dead. There's no other word for it. The Boulevard Twin has sold its last ticket.

I suppose the signs were there, but hindsight is 20/20. The Cine

Boulevard had been a discount theater for some time, and was still doing little business. Although on the main drag of Maryland Parkway, access was through two small driveways, and there wasn't much parking. The video games had been there forever—Tron, Zaxxon, Ms. Pac-Man, and one other I can't remember. Classics, true, but still old. The building could have used a cleaning, and the asphalt resurfacing. The bathrooms were green. There was that sunken, hollow look in the eyes of the employees, as if they had somehow divined the fate of their establishment. Movie watchers, waiting in ones and twos in the lobby, looked vaguely uncomfortable with the bench seats. And there were only two screens.

In a city like New York, there are so many people in such a small area that a theater with one lone screen can survive, perhaps on the foot traffic past the door. I don't think that this can happen in many other places, and apparently not in Las Vegas. We do have the Century 12, the Red Rock 11, the Paradise 8, and the Cinedome 6. The Cine Boulevard 2 was apparently below the threshold for success. Why is this? I've heard that a theater makes its money from the concession stand, not the showing of the movies, unless the theater is close to full. That means that the concession stand is going to have inflated prices, and that the critical element in theater operation is the number of screens (actually the ratio of screens to stands, but since you can just treat the income as though it is from only one stand, even when there are physically separate stands, this becomes simply the number of screens). The more screens you have bringing customers to your concessionaires, the more money you'll make.

Personally, I regret this. I don't want to sound like the piano player who complains that synthesizers don't make real music, or the tradi-

tional farmer who resents the fact that the advance of technology is putting him out of business; if these theaters are financially obsolete, then they're going out no matter what. (At least until the number drops so much that they can make a living on the smaller number of people who like smaller theaters.) Plus, I like the big theaters. They have something of a festival atmosphere; there's excitement in the air (psychic emanations perhaps). But I also like the single screen theaters when I feel like a laid-back outing. I like all theaters—I'm a theater kind of guy, and I'd like these small guys to hang around.

Perhaps there could be private theaters, where you pay an annual membership fee, and go in anytime. They could show six movies a day, all different, or double features. Or luxury theaters, where you'd pay to go into something like a fancy living room, with couches, and maybe with people to bring you food and drinks. (I have since heard that there is something like this in California.) The old MGM Grand Hotel (now Bally's Grand) here in Las Vegas used to do that, mostly (I suspect) to provide a break from the gaming tables without letting their customers out of the hotel, but something like this could become the center of a fancier movie date. Or even a movie theater with health food, someplace you could skip the popcorn and "butter", leave aside the soda and candy, and have a grapefruit juice and granola bar. What a thought.

Whatever happens, is certainly looks now as though the theater industry is going to crystallize out into big guys and little guys, and it'll probably happen sooner, not later. This kind of polarization usually means *big and quantity* and *small and quality*, though. Quality, of course, may be measured in service, type of movies, food, something else, or all of the above. Smart owners will get ready now.

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Students can avoid crime

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year he had met with both incoming freshmen and their parents. There were several meetings, and the point he repeatedly stressed to them was that the primary responsibility for stopping crime rests with the students, not the police.

What then can students do to prevent violent crime? Chief Hollenbeck offers the following advice:

"The robber or rapist is looking for a victim who will provide him with minimal resistance," Hollenbeck said. "He preys upon people that look unsure of themselves, preoccupied, or otherwise lost. take time to familiarize yourself with the campus."

"Have a sense of knowing where you're going and what you're doing. If you're going to be on campus after dark, try and walk with friends. If no friend is available call the Department of Public Safety Escort Service at 739-3668. A shuttle cart driven by a student who is in radio con-

tact with campus police will come to meet you and will take you to your car, your dormitory, the library, wherever you want to go on campus."

Chief Hollenbeck said he characterized the UNLV campus as being a safe one for students and visitors. In the two years that he has been here there have been no murders or reported rapes and only two robberies, both of which which occurred last year.

Although there have been several cases of assault, no one has been seriously hurt.

Property crimes on campus have been mostly opportunity thefts. To prevent these Hollenbeck suggested that students not leave books or personal belongings unattended or insufficiently secured.

Hollenbeck said he hopes that in the future the university will continue to be relatively crime free and the continued cooperation of everyone here at UNLV is crucial to this goal.

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