

BUSINESS

... in the black community (Part II)

By Roosevelt Fitzgerald

Neither the "Big Apple," "Sunset Strip," "The Loop," "Fisherman's Wharf" or the "French Riviera" can rival the Las Vegas Strip or Glitter Gulch of Fremont Street.

Beyond the glamour of the casinos and hotels is to be found a totally different Las Vegas. While the former is cosmopolitan and international in scope, the latter is ultra conservative. There is an inordinate number of churches and the people generally vote the conservative ticket.

In almost every section of town there are newly constructed housing developments, shopping centers, twenty-four hour grocery stores, banks, and other business enterprises. Those communities are economically "healthy," they contribute to the coffers of city, county and state governmental entities and they receive an equitable return on those contributions. Regrettably, such is not the case with all segments of the city. It is particularly not true of that area called the Westside.

Just over twenty years ago, March 1960, the local Chapter of the NAACP was instrumental in bringing to an end the segregationist

practices which had existed here since the early 1940s. A goodly portion of the city was opposed to intergration. Fortunately, it was realized that the kinds of racial demonstrations occurring in other parts of the U.S. would greatly, negatively affect Las Vegas. The powers that be did not cherish being put on the spot but, in effect, they had been made an offer they could not refuse. They relinquished and the barriers of segregation came tumbling down. There would, however, be hell to pay.

Black businesses, which had come into existence during the era of segregation, were affected. The thrust of the civil rights movement had been designed to terminate segregation in the public and private sectors. Once integration of facilities had occurred, Blacks, who had been restricted in where they could go, no longer were obligated to patronize Black businesses on the Westside. Those businesses did suffer. They had not thrived previously. To a large extent, most were under capitalized and did not carry as complete an inventory as did other businesses outside the area. Most owners were

not in a position to extend credit to customers and the general overall appearances of the structures were not something to write home

about.

Unlike businesses in other parts of Las Vegas, Westside businesses had not been afforded credit from lending

institutions which would have enabled them to present a more pleasant appearance. Passersby saw what they saw and were quick to re-

mark that "blacks did not maintain their businesses as did white businessmen." On its face, the statement was true. Further investigation



Test Yourself (Continued From Cover)

Step 4: Write the correct name under each photo. (No peeking.) Now check your answers against the cover.

Scoring

Results are based on testing by Memory Assessment Clinics Inc. of 50 normal subjects, 18 to 65 years of age.

- 7 correct answers: High memory performance.
- 6 correct: High average memory performance.
- 4-5 correct: Average memory performance.
- 2-3 correct: Low average memory performance.
- 0-1 correct: Low memory performance.

Taking this test challenged hundreds of thousands of nerve cells in your brain. To memorize the names and faces, your brain stored memory briefly in short-term memory (the smaller memory bank), then transferred it quickly to long-term memory, where it could remain for the rest of your life — depending on how well you stored it. This whole process took place in a

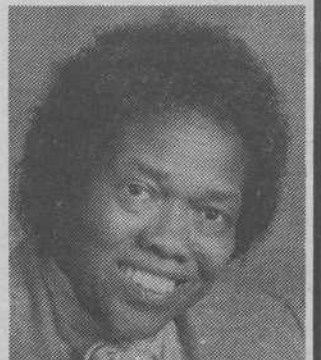
matter of seconds.

Yet recognizing a face is a complicated mental task that draws upon a series of nerve pathways and individual nerve cells, or neurons. "The perception of a face most probably hangs upon the activity of literally hundreds of thousands of these neurons," explains psychologist Mortimer Mishkin, chief, Laboratory of Neuropsychology at the National Institute of Mental Health. Looking at one face causes one pattern of neurons to fire; another face sparks another pattern. That difference, Mishkin says, "allows for the discrimination of faces."

Mishkin said his colleague Robert Desimore discovered neurons in the brain "so selective that they will only respond (or fire) to something that is as complicated as a face."

Moreover, some of these neurons "respond only to a full face view." As "a face is turned little by little, the neuron's response falls off." Others will fire only when the eye sends visual information about a face in profile, and still others respond only to views of a face somewhere in between.

— Sally Squires
The Washington Post



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