

# IN SEARCH OF HEROES

By Roosevelt Fitzgerald

Owen Wister is not my favorite author but he did write one of my favorite lines in his novel, *The Virginian*: "A man's sense of himself is the most important thing that he has." That line was written over three-quarters of a century ago and it is as accurate today as it was then. We all have a great need to feel good about ourselves and a good part of that feeling comes from the positive feedback we get from others.

Ideally, that positive feedback should be unsolicited. It is akin to getting a card or a letter or a phone call from someone we've not seen or heard from in a while. Being thought of in one's absence is tantamount to an acknowledgement of our value and it causes us to feel good and we are sometimes prompted to try and remember what it was we'd done to have impressed the writer or caller in such a way.

On the flip side of the coin, being ignored or forgotten can create a sense of valuelessness. Some of us have probably been the cause of such feelings even with those we allegedly care about. Who remembers being away from home either in the service, in college or working in another town and never writing or phoning unless things were tough — broke, sick or in trouble and having someone say: "We never hear from you until or unless you need something"? Remember? Remember how badly such a comment would make you feel especially if it were true? I remember it well. Having heard it — from my mother — did not make me alter my ways. Well, not at first anyway. After four or five times, however, I finally got the message. I initiated a policy of writing when I didn't need anything. I even wrote and thanked my parents, other relatives and friends for their help and their continuing interest in me. It made me feel good. I hadn't realized how much the ingrate I had been. It was small-scale stuff but the principle was the same as that applicable on a higher plane and with greater things.

That same scenario is repeated when it comes to the relationship between black and other minority groups with majority America. Even though we are

minority people it has only to do with our racial designation in relation to the overall. We are not minorities when it comes to rights of citizenship. However, the majority group, some of them, do not always understand this. They seem to think that because we only comprise twelve percent of the population, we're only entitled to twelve percent of the

contributions to the enhancement of the whole of America, there are some who are in opposition to that. They would have us believe that it is not due to racism but rather to differing ideologies. We know what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s ideology was — non-violence, brotherhood, equality, peace and their associates. Are we to infer that since the opposition's basic stance is anchored in

manner, their behavior will no longer be so described.

We have exercised a great deal of restraint and have exhibited great understanding and patience with their moral shortcomings — most of which is the result of their lack of data and an over-zealousness on their part to believe their contrived mythologies of their own heroes who have been imposed upon us regardless of their ideologies and conflicts with our own. We have a street named for President Andrew Jackson and he owned slaves. Do you suppose they imagine we agree with that ideology? Washington Street, the old-Jefferson School, Van Buren Street and so many other reminders of a time and a place and slave ownership. Do you suppose that they imagine that we are overjoyed with this?

We've had the dirt of their heroes swept under a carpet of such apparent thickness that it would fly Aladdin, non-stop to the high Himalayas and what has been unloaded on us, after sanitization, is a western version of Aesop's Fables.

Next week, we'll take a close look at some streets named for some of their heroes and we'll take a closer look at those heroes and see if they can stand the scrutiny of day.

**Tuesday, May 5  
is  
Primary Election  
Day**



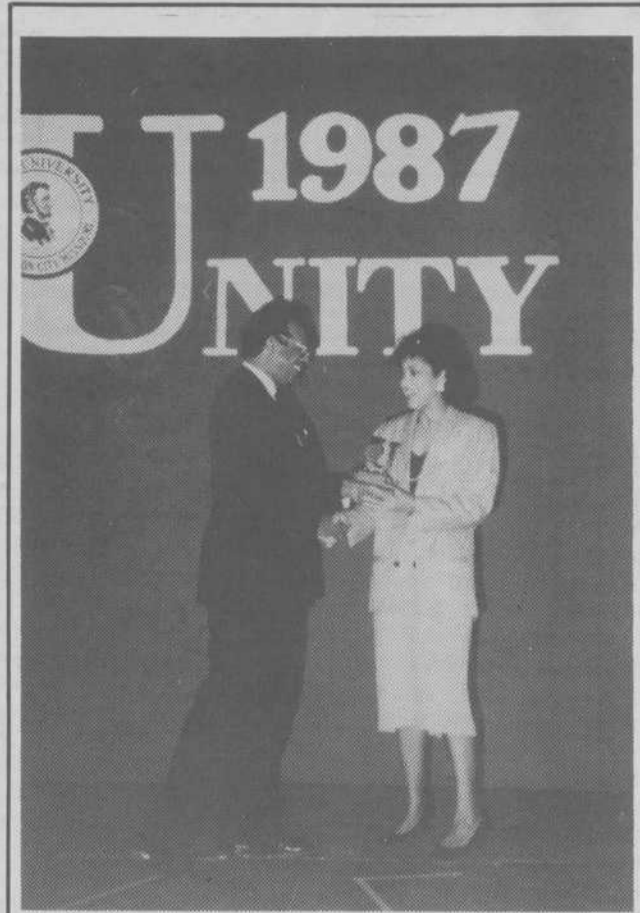
**Professor  
Fitzgerald is  
director of ethnic  
studies at  
University of  
Nevada-Las  
Vegas**

privileges of citizenship. Now, no one has said this but it is the day that reality appears. Let us not be misled into believing that what is actually so. More often than not, what appears to be is the reality which we must address.

Have you ever noticed that when it comes to us, we have to put in special requests for just about everything that matters or seem to matter other than for air and space? In regards to the current issue of re-naming a street to both acknowledge and to honor a black man who has made more than significant

"differing ideologies" that they do not subscribe to non-violence, brotherhood, equality, peace and so on? Obviously so.

The opposition refers to our characterization of their racist behavior as being "hackneyed." It is an interesting, although boring, ploy. Of course the words racist and racism are frequently used and I might add, for good reason. We will not cease using them simply because they have grown weary of hearing them. The burden for that cessation is theirs. The moment they cease behaving in a racist



**UNITY AWARDS** — Stanley S. Scott, Vice President and Director of Corporate Affairs, Philip Morris Companies, Inc., left, presents a Lincoln University "Unity Award in Media" to Janine Coveney McAdams of *Essence Magazine* at the school in Jefferson City, Mo. Ms. McAdams was co-author, along with Elaine C. Ray of "The Essence Guide to College Survival," the *Essence Magazine* piece that won top honors in the Education category. In a recent program sponsored in part by Philip Morris Companies, Inc. and Miller Brewing Company, the university presented awards in 21 categories to 38 journalists (or reporting teams) in both broadcast and print media "for excellence in reporting on issues that impact on the rights and well-being of minority and disadvantaged persons."



Super  
Grow



Are you tired of being embarrassed with loose dandruff, itchy scalp, falling hair?...Use the all new treatment called SPANISH SUR GRO. SPANISH SUR GRO is a natural product combined with modern research for all types of hair. SPANISH SUR GRO has been known to grow the hair 1/4 inch per week.

**MONEY BACK GUARANTEE**

Available wherever hair products are sold, including Mercedes Beauty Supply.

Distributed by Olga's Beauty Supply.

## PUBLIC AUCTION SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1987

The City of Las Vegas, Metropolitan Police Department, Clark County, Clark County Public Administrator, Sanitation District and other Government Agencies offer at Public Auction over 200 items including:

Automobiles, Trucks, Motor Homes, Vehicle Parts, Tires, Vans, Pickups, Bus, Station Wagons, and other vehicles.

Items may be seen at the Auction site from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. May 4 through May 8, 1987.

Bidder registration will begin at 7 A.M. May 9, 1987.

The Auction will start promptly at 8 A.M. on Saturday, May 9, 1987 at a lot south of the Clark County Road Division Offices, 5811 E. Flamingo.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL  
CLARK COUNTY PURCHASING  
455-4425**