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# Las Vegas, the Sin City

Photos and story by Chukwuka B. Osuorji

In the last two decades, Las Vegas has earned some negative reputations which are associated with commonly known social evils in the society. Las Vegas is the most populous city in the state of Nevada in U.S. It has steadily grown since its inception to earn several reputations owing to activities that take within the city. For instance, it has billed itself as the entertainment center or capital of the world owing to a wide range of entertainment options with casinos leading the list. Besides being the entertainment capital center, it has been called Sin City and the recreation center. All these labels have been invented to depict the social activities that take place within this city, which is found in a dessert (Romero 80).

The reputation of Las Vegas can be traced to gambling, which is the main economic activity in the city. Although gambling activities were outlawed in U.S in the past, they later became legal and some sanity was put in the industry. In Las Vegas, gambling activities have almost spiraled out of control because they have attracted a lot of side businesses. One of the social evils that is directly attributed and connected to gambling is prostitution due to the free flow of money. Prostitutes are commonly found on the streets, in gambling dens and in massage parlors which are frequented by patrons with money from gambling. Prostitution is one evil that earned Las Vegas the title of Sin City because many people do not approve the practice (Romero 10).

Having world class hotels and casinos is a hallmark of Las Vegas, and it is this hallmark that confers the city with the reputation of a recreation center. Many people, especially retirees, have been known to have lost all their entire life savings in Las Vegas through gambling (Bernhard 12). Gambling promises so much, yet this is all an illusion that is designed to relieve people of their hard earned money. In order to make people take life easy in Las Vegas, drugs have infiltrated the city which account for many underground crimes. Pleasure is usually sweeter with these illicit substances that add wild fun to the recreation activities and make people throw all caution to the wind. Interestingly, the illicit social activities like drugs and prostitution rake in a lot of revenues for the city (Eadington 184).

I have witnessed some of these activities in Las Vegas. The reputation of Las Vegas being a Sin City is largely attributed to prostitution and drug problems, which lower the moral standards of the city. In addition, there are high levels of pleasure that scare people and leave very little room for moral values to thrive. Because chapels are open 24 hours a day with no need for reservations, there have been weddings that have been conducted between drunken people only to be annulled the next day when they sober up. As if this is not enough, the gambling casinos are thriving, and very luxurious hotels are expanding. It even advertises that a person can act without his or her normal moral character with the city's ad campaign: "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

It is no wonder that Las Vegas has attracted all these reputations.

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"Ben" Osuorji visits Sin City.

