

# miscellanea

**It's a saga of a newspaper's responsibility** to print the news even if controversy and criticism are a reality.

This particular news story concerned the racial disparity in the national Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. The story, originally in The Chronicle of Higher Education, indirectly cast specific racial groups in a bad light.

Student newspapers across the country — including the Emerald — ran the story, causing a smattering of criticism. It was nothing compared to the furor the University of New Mexico's Daily Lobo stirred up when it ran the news story and an editorial on the SAT scores. The Daily Lobo was put practically under siege by several hundred angry students. In the course of the controversy the managing editor resigned and the editor was suspended. The editor then sued and was subsequently reinstated.

**The saga begins with an editorial** on the SAT scores in the Oct. 13 Daily Lobo. The editorial was headlined: "Discrimination is sometimes desirable." Here's the first paragraph:

"For 11 years the College Board that administers the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) has refused to release racial and ethnic scores. This month, however, the board reversed its policy, opened its books, and proved what everyone knew all along — minorities are academically inferior to whites."

The editorial was initialed MB for Mark Blazek, then managing editor.

**Oct. 14... Members of UNM student groups demonstrate** against the Daily Lobo and demand the resignation of Blazek and Marcy McKinley, the paper's editor. An apology editorial runs, stating the opinions

were those only of the author, Blazek. Blazek hands in his resignation that morning. McKinley plans to announce a decision on whether he will stay. Meanwhile various student organizations hold a press conference.

**Oct. 15... 11 student groups rally and march** on the Daily Lobo offices. They confront McKinley, demanding her resignation. Blazek's resignation is accepted. The paper has an editorial headlined: "Discrimination is never desirable." A guest editorial from the "Student Coalition Against Racism" condemns the paper's editorial policy. Protesters stage a sit-in in the newspaper's offices. McKinley says she will not resign. The Daily Lobo photo editor, speaking for the staff, says they did not support the editorial.

**Later that same day,** student groups announce they will bring

formal charges against McKinley to the University's Publication Board.

**Oct. 18... Publications Board suspends McKinley,** as several hundred students in the largest auditorium on campus cheer. Six pages of charges were lodged against McKinley. Robert Lawrence, journalism department chairman, calls the proceedings a "lynch committee."

The editorial for Oct. 18 is headlined: "Freedom of expression will prevail."

**Oct. 19... McKinley retains a lawyer** and considers legal action regarding the suspension by the Publications Board. She demands to be reinstated. The legality of the board's suspension is questioned. There are no provisions in the board's bylaws regarding suspending an editor.

**Oct. 20... The Publications Board holds an emergency**

meeting. They meet in executive session. "No comment," says chairman Lawrence after the meeting.

**Oct. 21... McKinley is reinstated as editor.** Upon the advice of legal counsel the board reverses its suspension. McKinley's reinstatement sparks a protest march in front of the Daily Lobo's offices. Protesters carry signs reading

"Dump racist Lobo editorial staff."

**Oct. 22... McKinley, back in the editorship,** writes an editorial questioning integrity of the University's student groups. She calls the whole debacle a "gang war" consisting of "petty bureaucrats" who "bribe officials."

**The saga surely doesn't end there — stay tuned.**

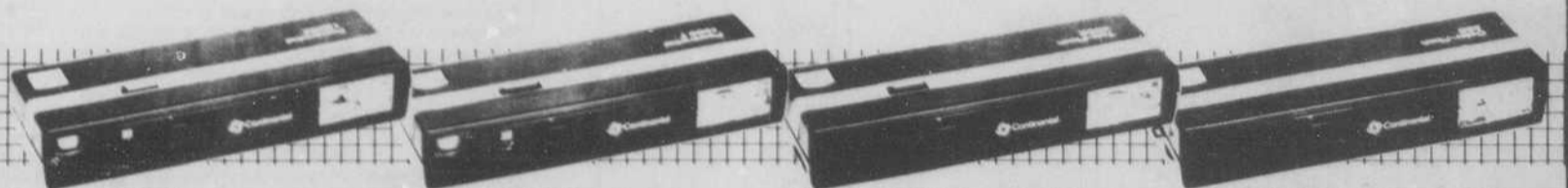
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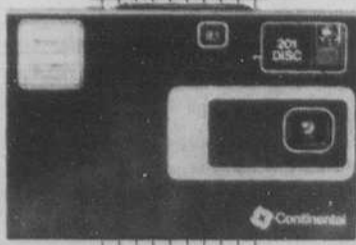
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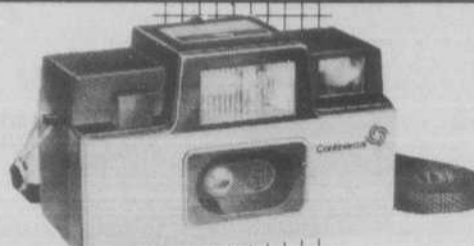
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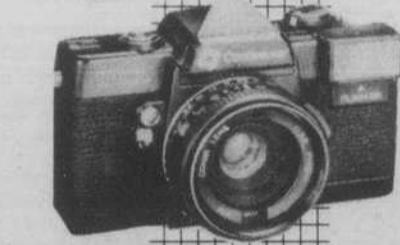
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