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Maine Campus hasn't reported fight properly

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Maine Campus hasn't reported fight properly

To the Editor:

In response to the article pertaining to the attack of two "black students" (Feb. 18, 1991), we feel your paper is actually the one appearing racially motivated.

If it is true that the attack that was reported on was not racially motivated, why did your paper feel it necessary to identify the students involved as being "black?"

According to the article, the race of the students didn't matter. The point of interest in the article should have been that they are UMaine students, not "black." If the students had been white, would that have been stated in the headline? Do

you think it should have been?

As the prominent media on this campus, you are obligated to report on events as they happen in an accurate and objective manner. We don't feel this was done in this case.

Your headlines seemed almost speculative that the fight was race related and the headlines are no place for speculations.

Perhaps more accurate reporting would have occurred had you included the real cause of the fight in the headline, instead of your stereotypical label "black" and the supposed reason that the fight didn't start.

After all, you wouldn't want to

create the "black vs. white under-tow," would you?

Beth Romano
Orono
Andy Brown
Bangor

Editor's note: The story Romano and Brown are commenting on ("Two black students accosted on Crosby St.," MC, Feb. 18, 1991) is factually correct.

Their confusion comes from a misunderstanding of how news is reported.

This newspaper did not say the event was not racially motivated. Orono police chief Dan Lowe said

the event was not racially-motivated.

Because Quester Hannah did not want to comment to the media until he gave a statement to police, because Aaron Phillips was unable to be reached for comment, and because the names of those charged were not released by Lowe, we could only carry Lowe's comments.

We identified the students as being black because the incident involved to racially-homogenous groups in physical conflict. In Orono, this is unusual. Therefore, it is newsworthy.

Also, they were identified as being black because, despite chief Lowe's assertion, UMaine is very

conscious of race relations (as the letters in this publication today will prove), and, as such, activities which may involve race clash are of news value.

Never did this newspaper offer its own reason for why the fight started, or whether race was involved, or in any other way offer its own account of the events. We report on what people tell us. If Romano and Brown don't like what they hear, they should complain to the persons whom we quoted, not the messenger.

We assert that our coverage of this event has been fair, even, and balanced.