

Civil Rights Journal

Interpreting  
Aptitude Scores

By Dr. Charles E. Cobb

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Recently the College Board announced that blacks score an average of 100 points lower on the Scholastic Aptitude Test which is the standardized test for screening college applicants. The College Board is a non-profit organization of 2500 schools and colleges.

These figures have not been made public in previous years in order to prevent a misconception regarding the ability of minority students. The psychological data show that teachers who have been given prior expectations of student performance levels usually teach at those levels. Apparently the College Board's reasoning for previously withholding this information was to prevent this teacher bias.

They have now decided to release this information according to the president, George Hanford, in order to "illuminate the extent and nature of the educational deficit this nation must

overcome" and "demonstrating the need for more affirmative action with respect to access to higher education".

I am concerned about these data for two basic reasons. First, the reports looks at external characteristics and differences among students without taking into account the test bias. How many blacks or other minorities participated in the examination?

Secondly, the stated rationale for not having released this information in the past appears to be even more relevant today. We have an administration that has explicitly and clearly demonstrated its lack of concern for affirmative action and any other remedy for historic forms of educational discrimination. It has a public sentiment reminiscent of the days of separate but equal

facilities. Thus I question the College Board's reasoning and judge-

ment. I assure you that some high ranking education "expert" will attempt to use this information in order to further polarize the black and white community.

By Shawn Bodrick  
Federal money for college educations continues to dwindle, but more than 2,000 North Carolina Central University students have bitten the bullet and are struggling to stay in school, while coping with the money crunch.

All of these students are black.

Ironically, Central's white students appear to have an easier financial time of it. There are more than 500 white students among the near-

ly 5,000 students at Central this semester.

As part of the controversial "consent decree" that got the statewide University of North Carolina system out of federal court on racial discrimination charges, NCCU must attract more white students. To help them do this, the state has provided so-called "minority presence" money for eligible white students.

According to Central officials, to be eligible for "minority presence"

money, white students simply have to be North Carolina residents and be enrolled in at least two courses per semester. University officials say the funding level of this program has not been reduced.

Meanwhile, many black students at Central are struggling to cope.

"I am receiving some BEOG (Basic Education Opportunity Grant) money," explained Bridgett Faison, an 18-year-old Cary High School graduate. "But

I'm also working part-time at the Big Star (grocery store) to help with the rest. I'm lucky, too, because I have family here so that will save the cost of living in the dorm."

That's the basic story for most students, from freshmen to seniors, who are struggling to stay in college. They are getting what they can, work wherever they can find a job, or jobs and cutting corners as much as possible. Families are also helping.

For example, Douglas

Marrimon, a biology major from Brooklyn, N.Y., received only \$600 in work study funds, and his family is footing the balance of his college bill.

Vereen David, a New York business administration major, gets grant funds that cover about 25% of his \$2,344 college costs for this year. That figure includes tuition, room and board. He's got to come up with the balance.

Michelle Crowder, and English/journalism (Continued on Page 16)

NCCU Students Struggle With Budget Cuts

Plain Talk About The Law  
Door-To-Door Sales

By North State Legal Services

One of the main objectives of our Community Education Program at North State Legal Services is to prevent legal problems from happening. Knowing what to look for in contracts and knowing what the law is, can be very helpful when it comes to door-to-door sales.

The Federal Trade Commission's Office of Consumer Protection has been successful in protecting most door-to-door sales customers. Under an FTC rule, door-to-door customers have three days to change their mind (cool off) about purchases of \$25 or more. The door-to-door salesperson must inform you of your cancellation rights under this "three day cooling off period."

The contract you sign must also explain your right to cancel and you must be given two copies of a cancellation form. Always make sure the contract or receipt is dated and shows the name and address of the seller.

If at any time within three business days after the door-to-door sale takes place, you change your mind, you should sign and date one copy of the cancellation form. Then mail or hand deliver it to the address given for cancellation before midnight of the third business day after the contract was signed. Keep the other cancellation form for your records.

Proof of the mailing date and proof that the cancellation form has been received are important. Even though it is not required, you may want to send the cancellation form from

the post office. There you can have it certified and request a return receipt. If you aren't given a cancellation form required by law, you should write your own cancellation letter and let the Federal Trade Commission know you were not given the forms.

You don't have to explain why you're cancelling the contract. Under the law, you have a legal right to change your mind. If you do decide to cancel, the merchant must do the following within ten days:

- cancel and return any papers you signed
- refund your money and tell you whether any product left with you will be picked up
- return any trade-in

Within twenty days, the merchant must:

- either pick up the items left with you, or
- if you agree to send back the items, reimburse you.

This important FTC rule applies not only to sales made in your home, but also to sales agreements made anywhere other than the seller's normal place of business. The "three day cooling off period" applies to consumer product "parties" given in private homes and to sales made out of rented hotel rooms or restaurants. This rule also applies if you invite a merchant into your home or into someone else's home, or if you meet on a street corner. In all of these cases, you still have your cancellation rights.

The best thing to do to prevent problems with door-to-door sales is to take your time and make sure you really want the product being offered to you.

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