

BRIAN SAULS/The Gamecock



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Seek and you shall find, maybe

Yes, it's that time again. . . time to brave the bookstores in preparation for classes. Both the South Carolina Bookstore at Greene and Main and the USC University Bookstore in Russell House are packed with texts and school supplies. With an overabundance of merchandise and capacity crowds jamming the stores, sometimes that one last book can be hard to find. Bill Mitrik, freshman English major, and Rikka Salonen, exchange student in business, searched for books Tuesday at the University Bookstore.

Southerners prefer living, working in South to elsewhere

By the Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) - Southerners believe the South is the best place to live and work, according to a sociologist who said he found that the area is no better or worse than any other in the United States.

Brian Sherman, a Mercer University-Atlanta sociologist, made his comments Wednesday during a panel discussion on *Work and Economic Growth in the South* during the opening day of the American Sociological Association's annual meeting that runs through Saturday.

Sherman, a New York City native, said he moved to Atlanta 12 years ago after 33 years in New York, because he was "attracted by the image of the South."

But after living here and studying the people of the South, "especially white Southerners," he said he found

that "Southerners pretty much live like people in the rest of the United States."

"I was struck by all the similarities," said Sherman, "that perhaps the only difference is that Southerners have a vested interest in perpetuating the image that the South is different and basically want to maintain this image."

He said he found the attitude among Southerners was that their area was the best place to live.

"Southerners socialize themselves and each other into treating these beliefs as truth," said Sherman. "By doing so, they create an emotional vested interest in not complaining about circumstances which residents of other parts of the country do complain about. These include poor working conditions and destruction of the environment due to industry and development."

"Southerners tend to tell themselves and each other

that they like the South. Non-southerners are more likely to give themselves and their cohabitants a much greater proportion of negative messages about where they live," he said.

But, Sherman said, in reality, Southerners—like those in other sections of the country—devote most of their waking hours to working.

"The remarkable sociological fact is that the overwhelming majority of the population accepts this state of affairs, and Southerners even more so," he said.

"Southerners work more cheerfully in less favorable working conditions for less pay and still talk about the advantages of living in the South. Because of their attitude of satisfaction with where they are, Southerners are less perceptive about the realities of their working situations," said Sherman.

"Businesses subtly manipulate their Southern workforce by reinforcing this Chamber of Commerce mentality . . . Images of both an Old South and a New South . . . are elaborated to prevent Southerners from seeing things as they really are," he said.

Sherman said their self-image is reinforced by the relocation of businesses to the South, which Southerners see "as an unalloyed benefit."

"The sacrifices in everyday economic life, such as tax abatements, dislocation of residents, lower wages, increased traffic and sewer burdens, and ease of environmental and other restrictions, are generally left unexamined," he said.

This positive self-image makes it difficult for labor unions to organize and to improve working conditions in the South, said Sherman.

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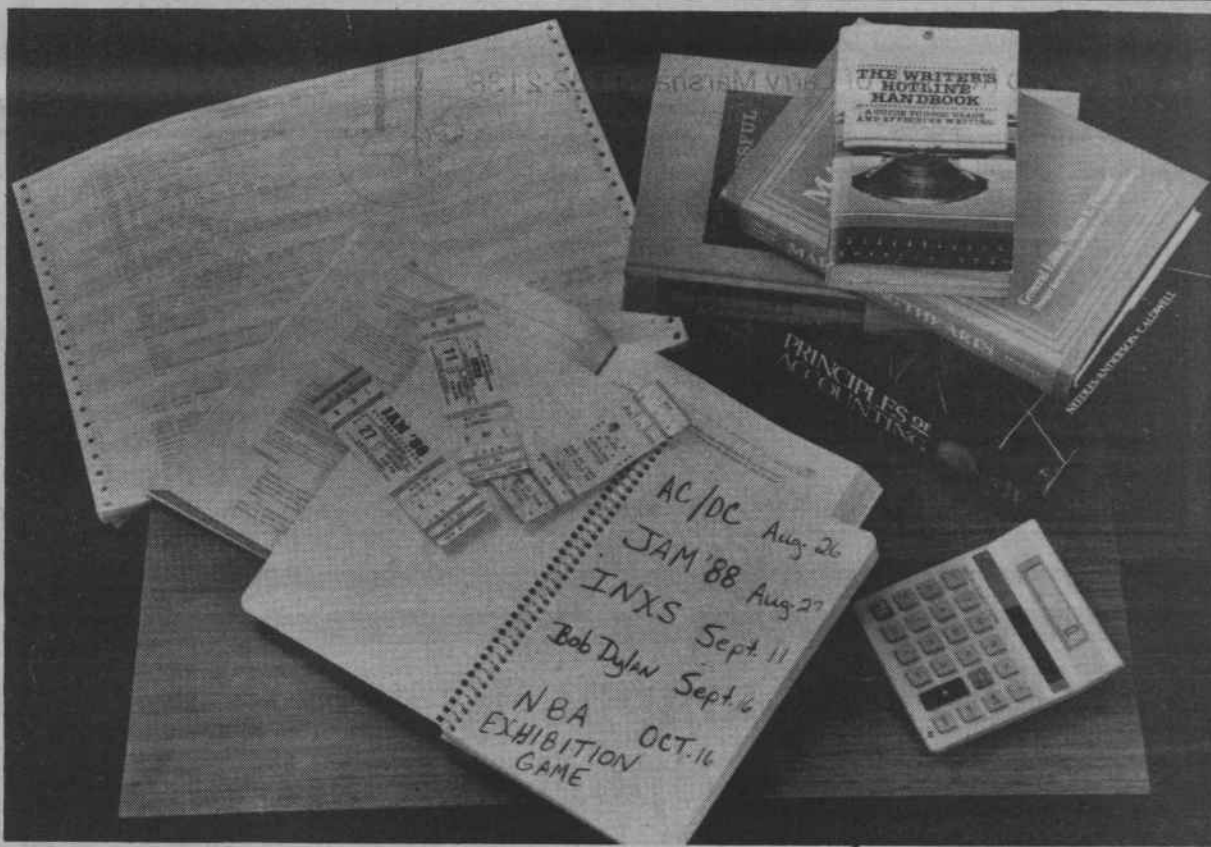
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