

chuck dean's



Random Patterns

"One night in Iowa, he and I in a borrowed car/ went driving in the summer, promises in every star/ out in the distance I could hear some people laughing/ I felt my heart beat back a weekend's worth of sadness . . ." —Aimee Mann

Spring Break: It starts Friday. I'm going nowhere. No one invited me to vacation with them. Robby Benson, I waited like clockwork for your invitation. James Holderman, Todd Ellis and wild horses couldn't drag me on vacation with any of you now. I wanted so much to spend my time off from "The USC" with all of you, but the invitations never came. Now I'm alone. And I realize who my true friends aren't. I had such great plans for us . . . thanks a lot.

Vacation No. 1: If I were to vacation with Robby and Karla, I would want to go somewhere big and impersonal, where we could blend in with the scenery and not be noticed. There, we could enjoy the company of each other. I considered a place like Cayce, but decided it was too close; Robby would only worry about his work. Then, I thought of Los Angeles, but it's too far. Then, I hit me — New York. It's perfect. Karla, Robby and I could be jet setters.

We could walk the city's crowded streets and make fun of people's hairdos. We could feed pigeons, and Robby could jokingly warn, "Don't get a lot of them buggers flying over your head. You know what could happen." Then, we'd all three laugh in unison and hold our stomachs and say, "Oh, Robby!" Then, we'd stop and give some loose change to a bum so we wouldn't feel so guilty about having such a fun time. We three could take the subway. During the ride, we'd stand opposite each other and make eye contact. Robby would make a silly, goofy face at us, and we'd all start laughing again, but no one would notice us because this is

New York City. Finally, Robby, Karla and I could hold hands and take a walk in Central Park. Karla could break from my and Robby's grip and run in front of us and throw her arms and legs into the air as she sings, "If I could make it here, I'd make it anywhere. It's up to you, New York, New York . . ." Robby would drop my hand and start clapping and whistling for Karla.

Vacation No. 2: If I were to vacation with Jim Holderman, I'd shoot for the minimalist kind of retreat. I'd want to do something personal, intimate — almost unnatural. I'd like to take my car and tour South Carolina, seeing portions of this great state that Jim and I have never seen. We could visit towns such as Easley, Timmonsville and Clover. We could stay in little motels that have names like "The Dew Drop Inn," "Rest 'n' Relax" or "Bill and Belle's." We'd make sure that no news reporters were following us, trying to collect evidence to start a vicious rumor about me and Jim.

Jim and I would keep a diary and call it *On the Road, Part Two*. We'd share the burden of driving. Oh, the pleasure of looking into Jim's basset hound-like eyes and saying, "Hey, pal, you look pretty bushed. Why don't you climb in the backseat and catch some shut-eye?"

Vacation No. 3: There is no question. Todd and I would head straight for the beach. We'd take Todd's car and cooler. I'd offer him gas money, and he'd say, "Man, don't worry about it. I have a Shell card. We're set." Then, he'd fill up the tank and insist on pumping. When we get on the road, Todd would put in the *Animal House* soundtrack and turn the volume up to eight, maybe even nine. Todd and I would sing "Shout" and "Louie, Louie." Occasionally, I'd stick my fist in Todd's face, and he'd pretend it's a microphone and sing a solo. We would blow our horns at girls with "Florida or Bust" signs displayed in their back windshields. Todd would look over at me and say, "Florida, Bust and both if we're lucky." Then, he'd elbow me, and we'd both laugh like hyenas.

Once in Florida, Todd and I would check into a hotel. We'd get ready for the beach. I'd tell him to comb his hair and to check his belly button for lint. Outside, we'd stop behind a dune (so that no one could see us), and I'd put some Tropicana sun-tan oil on Todd's back so that he won't burn.

Spring break starts Friday. I truly hope each one of you will have fun — a rip-roaring good time. Honestly.



Greek wars

Thursday's snow made perfect ammunition for a mega-battle among Carolina's quadrangle fraternities.

ANDREW J. LAWRENCE/The Gamecock

Hope for exam-time blues

Professor studies short-term memory

By SHERRI TILLMAN
Staff writer

A USC professor has done a study on the importance of short-term memory and its role in performing everyday tasks.

Psychology professor Randall Engle did a study of short-term working memory capacity, which is the part of the memory that holds very recent information or events.

"It's very similar to what we've thought of a long time as consciousness," Engle said. "It's as William James said in 1900, 'The conscious present and the recent past.'"

The research was conducted with the help of elementary school students as well as college students from all types of backgrounds.

"The tasks were different. We made them simpler for the children," Engle said, but said each grade showed similar results considering the difficulty of the task.

"(It) is very important in things like reading comprehension . . . and following directions," he said.

Working memory capacity predicts quite accurately how well a person can follow directions, Engle said. In a recent study on note taking, he said individuals with larger working memory capacities

tended to take more comprehensive notes, and the study offers further proof that real-life tasks depend on working memory capacity.

Some students learn to retrieve information in a superficial way — cramming. "They may remember answers for the test, but they walk out of class, and it's forgotten," Engle said. "So the best thing to do when you study is to try and fit in new information with stuff that you already know."

Working memory capacity can help students to improve their study habits, Engle said. "The student should try to get the information into small packets. Don't try to do so broad a section at one time."

Engle said a person should break up information into small segments that he can understand and go on from that point.

The following is advice that Engle gives to students in his courses:

- Get an overall idea of the material you need to study.
- Don't wait until the night before the exam to study; study as the class progresses.
- Read for comprehension.
- Take notes on important points.
- Try to understand things repeated by the

teacher or the book.

- Use a highlighter for important points, not whole passages.
- After a lecture, rewrite your notes and elaborate on them.

As society becomes more and more complex, particularly in the highly technical areas, Engle said people must understand their working memory better to use it to its fullest potential.

"For example, the Three Mile Island incident back a couple of years ago. That problem occurred simply because the computer operator at the plant had too many things happening at one time," Engle said. It was a psychological problem because of the fact that the operator could not comprehend all information the computer was giving out to make an adequate decision, he said.

Engle said it is not known exactly what limits working memory capacity; however, he stated two possible theories. "It is possible that it is an individual difference like height and weight . . . or the nature-nurture problem, whether your personality is a product of genetic characteristics contributed by your parents or . . . because of a reinforcement to the way you behaved as a child. I don't know the answer," Engle said.

ATTENTION SENIORS!

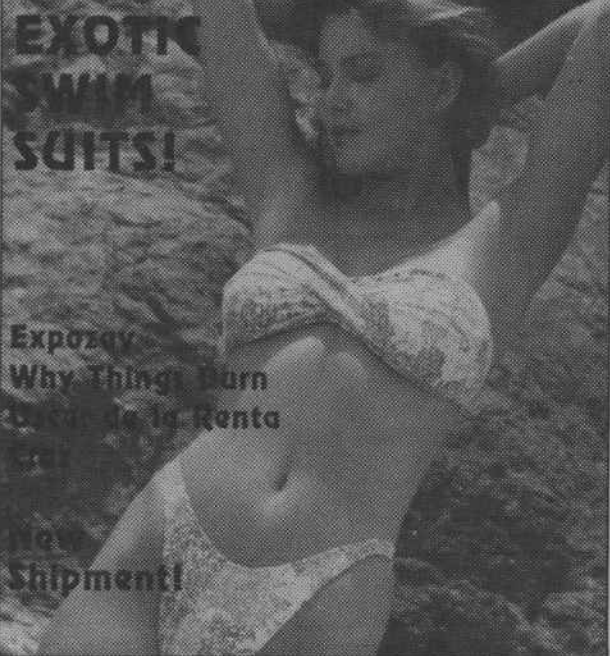
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Applications are available from Student Government, the Information Desk in Russell House, and the Office of Student Affairs, room 109 Russell House.

DEADLINE FOR ALL APPLICATIONS IS FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1989 AT 5:00 P.M., ROOM 109 RUSSELL HOUSE!!



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