

Relationship of giving, taking and laughter

By VICKI DAUGHTRY
Staff Writer

Many college students worry about how to get along with a roommate. But Allison Beck and Debbie Street, UNC juniors and third-year roommates, use honesty and laughter to ward off tension and enrich their friendship.

Beck and Street, both from Gastonia, have been friends for 10 years. As incoming freshmen, they were warned against rooming together.

"Everybody kept telling us that you can't room with your best friend and remain friends," Beck said, "but it's not true."

Although their relationship is not free from disagreements, they prevent serious arguments by being honest with each other. Their honesty in turn eliminates the chance of anger building inside them.

"It should be natural to be honest with somebody," Street said.

Sometimes constructive criticism is necessary. The key to this is not what is said, but how it is taken.

Laughter and good-naturedness give Street and Beck a positive outlet in which to express their criticism.

"If you criticize someone in a positive manner," Street said, "they're more likely to use this criticism and not let it hurt their feelings."

Beck and Street place laughter high on their list of ways to get along with each other.

"If you can't laugh," Beck said, "you might as well hang it up."

Street and Beck use their differences to help each other instead of letting them cause conflicts.

"Beck said she is organized and a little



Debbie Street, left, and Allison Beck, roommates for three years, enjoy afternoon TV following a day of classes.

DTH/Jamie Moncrief

skeptical sometimes.

"Debbie encourages me not to worry about everything so much," Beck said.

Street said she is more spontaneous.

"Allison keeps me from going over-board sometimes," Street said.

"We overlook each other's faults and try to lift each other up," she said. "I know she'll always be there, and she knows she can count on me."

"Roommates are a valuable resource," she added. "You're only doing yourself damage when you don't put forth a little effort to remain friends."

Respect is another major contributor to their relationship's success.

"We respect each other's privacy and property," Street said. "We share, but we take care of each other's stuff if we

use it."

To get the most out of this unique relationship, both said roommates need an overall good attitude about each other.

"You ought to get into the habit of saying good things about your roommate(s) — to them and to others," Beck said. "They're the closest thing to family and home that you have, so why not make the most of it?"

Street concluded, "It's probably the closest relationship I'll have other than when I get married. It takes so little effort to accomplish, yet its rewards are so great."



American Heart Association

The newly individuated 'Tar Heel' writing test

Students who come by the 'Daily Tar Heel' office from 2-3 or 7-8 p.m. today through Friday will be assigned a story due in two days (not including Saturday.) Prospective writers are encouraged to come up with their own story ideas, but

be sure to talk to Arnie, Dave or Stuart about your plans before you begin. We're looking for people with flair, energy and creativity, not simply those with a knowledge of journalistic style. Good luck!

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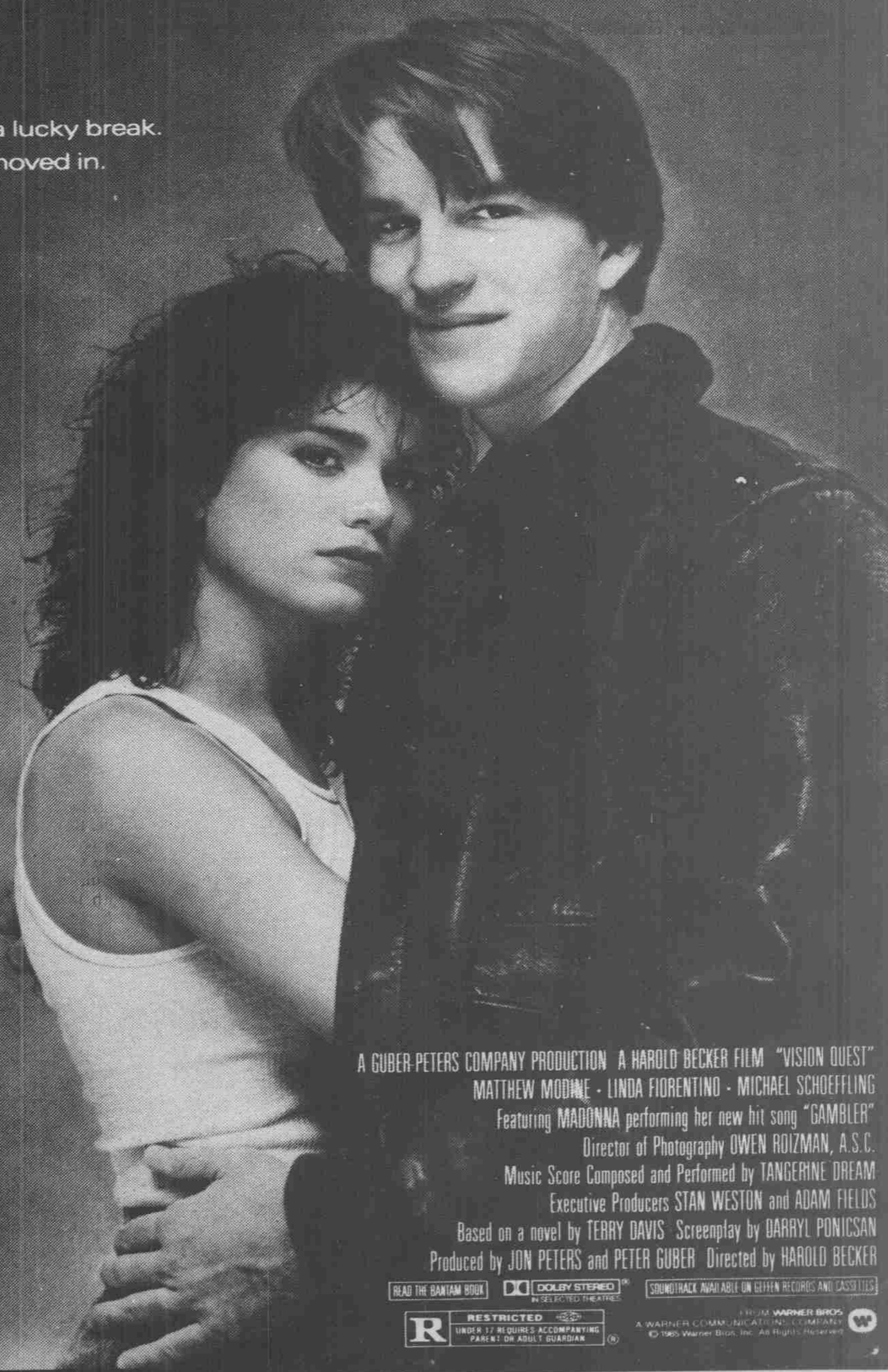
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