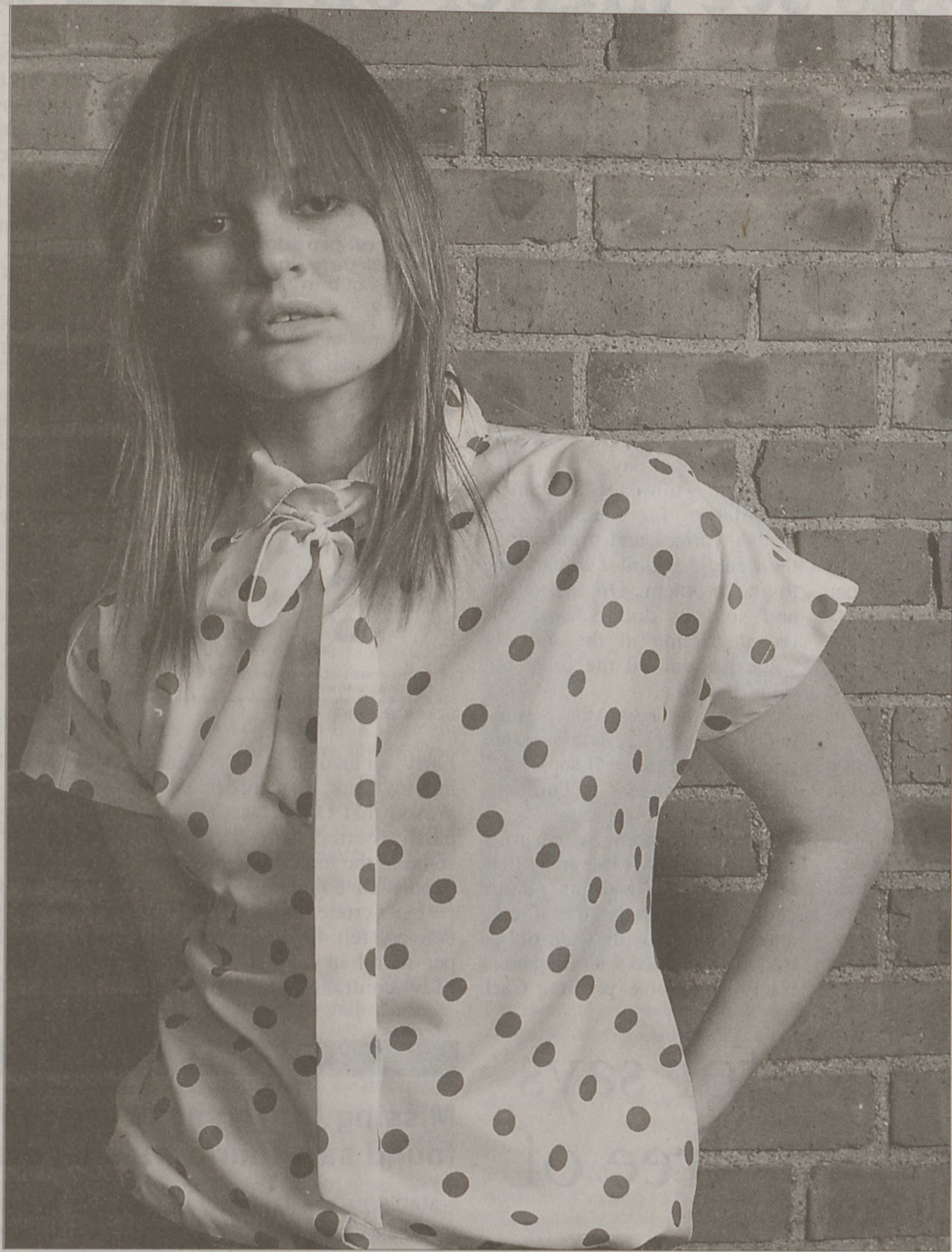


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RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Krysten Allison, a senior communications major, wears a polka-dotted shirt complete with a flirty tie. Polka dots and other patterns paired with anything from denim, linen, pants or skirts are must-have items for this spring.

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CAMPUS Couture

with Lauren Smith

Stripes, polka dots and tropical prints are risky, especially if the craziest thing you have ever done is switch the wrist you wear your watch on or write a fan letter to Scott Baio of "Charles in Charge." This season, prints and patterns in all colors and sizes are everywhere, so step out of your comfort zone and try them out.

Stripes are present this season in the form of sweaters, skirts and pants.

Seersucker, a blue and white pinstripe pattern, is a must for this spring and summer. The material is lightweight and so crisp that you just might feel like a J.Crew model casually strolling to class. There are both men's and women's pants and button-down shirts in this pattern. Because the stripes in this pattern are vertical, the pattern is slenderizing and flattering. When wearing stripes, it is essential to avoid

"Dress sharply and they notice the dress. Dress impeccably, and they notice you."

— Coco Chanel designer

horizontals on the bottom.

Polka dots are especially popular on swimsuits this season.

From my brother's black board shorts with large, hot pink and white polka dots to my roommate's white suit with pastel polka dots, I think I am seeing spots

when I close my eyes.

Multi-colored polka dots are better for girls, while guys should stick to polka dots in a solid color. Polka dots also work well as an accessory for a girl, in the form of a belt or headband.

The tropical print is in full effect this season, so it is not just reserved for your annual beach trip. Since dresses are so hot right now, girls should try a tropical print dress. But, to avoid having the dress look like a muumuu, belt it with a ribbon that coordinates with the dress.

Guys, please button your tropical shirt, and lose the

See Patterns on page 10A

Patterns of all shapes and sizes are perfect for spring



Left: **Ross Peavey** (left), a senior political science major and **Jason Cornelius**, a senior environmental design major sport classic looks by a classic car. Peavey pairs a blazer with a seersucker shirt and khaki shorts. Seersucker fabric combines texture and pattern for a crisp look. Cornelius relaxes in a polo shirt and white linen pants, adding flip-flops for a super-casual, laidback attitude.



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Krysten Allison, a senior communications major, and Ross Peavey, a senior political science major, take their patterns to the streets of Northgate.

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

With the job market in a drought that is awaiting May graduates as well as the upcoming end of "Friends," times are tough for college students these days. Despite the political state of the United States, fashion fans can take comfort in the fact that "it's really a happy time," said Sonia Gibson, fashion and public relations director for Saks Fifth Avenue at Bal Harbour, Fla., as reported by the Miami Herald. This time of stripes, prints and polka dots is a change, but though these patterns do seem fresh, they have a rich history in fashion.

Patricia McFall of the U. Daily News praises Hawaiian shirts as "a California legend."

"Originally brought here in large numbers and loud colors by troops from the Pacific in World War II, the same shirts were later rescued from their sons and some daughters," McCall said.

World War II, besides changing the way the world functioned, also gave birth to authentic American fashions that had not existed before. Fashion designers could no longer make trips across the Atlantic to France to copy their designs upon returning to the United States. American designers were cut off from Paris couture due to the German battleships stationed in the Atlantic Ocean. Out of mere necessity, designers in New York City had to become more creative, resulting in the United States becoming a major player in sportswear fashion.

Vintageblues.com, which provides a detailed history of fashion, marks 1947 as a year that mirrors where fashion is this spring.

"Christian Dior introduced the 'New Look,' featuring longer lengths and fuller skirts, a return to classic femininity," the Web site reported. "Women's fashion changed to a soft, feminine and romantic image."

Amongst the floral prints, citrus colors and ruffles, the dress is back and better than ever — a must-have for spring.

Jacqui Lividini, fashion director for Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City, said this season has been one of the best for dresses in years, as reported in The New York Times.

"Particularly successful are halter-style sundresses, chiffon evening dresses in watery prints and anything with an off-the-shoulder feminine collar on top," she said.

This romantic feel that reflects current fashions has carried over into men's fashions as well.

The National Association of Men's Sportswear Buyers (NAMSB) calls 2004 the year of "casual elegance" in the form of lightweight suits in pastel colors.

The NAMSB expects to see more striped patterns everywhere, particularly in the form of cotton sports coats.

Jack Herschlag, NAMSB executive director in New York City said, "I just think that's the cycle. Stripes are the easiest type of pattern to make."

These trends in men's and women's fashions are not just an "American thing," as the first week in March at Milan's Fashion Week displayed similar trends.

Suzy Menkes of the International Herald Tribune summed up the week's looks in her wrap-up. Burberry's look was cute and charming, she said, but she could not understand the "obsession with girlish dresses" that Burberry and Marc Jacobs had.

"With their hair tied in bandeau scarves, the models looked sleek. The hard soft masculine-feminine theme was done in a ladylike way, with attention to detail: a flower pattern worked in relief on a leather jacket or a bow on the front of a pump," Menkes said in describing Ferragamo's line.

The tweed trend has carried over from winter to spring, designer Veronica Etro said. Etro said she thinks the material sticks to the overarching romantic theme.

"Printing the sensible country stuff with sweet roses and mixing patterns in one coat or a jacket with a full skirt," she said. "A soft surface, such as tweed or velvet, and a fuzzy printing effect make the plethora or pattern easier to digest."



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Whit Wolman, a senior industrial distribution major, whispers sweet nothings into senior English major Meggie Assad's ear.