

Student actor learns that it pays off to advertise

One UNC sophomore has found a summer job with all the opportunities college students are looking for — one that includes having fun, making lots of money, advancing your career, working only a few days out of the summer and maybe getting a shot at fame and fortune.

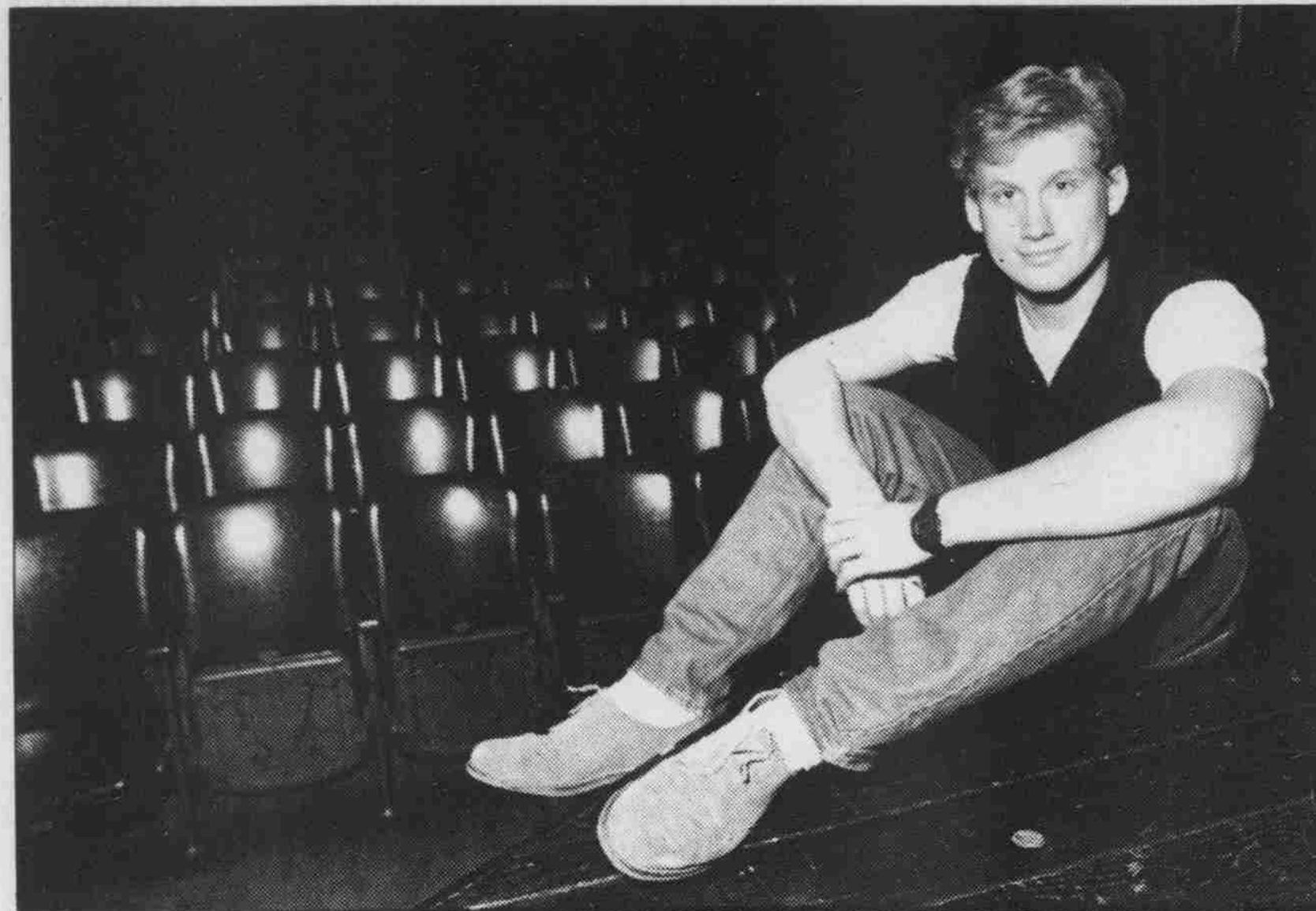
Reed Diamond, a sophomore drama major from New York, starred in four commercials last summer. You may have seen him in currently-running spots for McDonald's, J.C. Penney, and Oxywash.

"It's a fun summer job," Diamond said. And the pay isn't bad for the work he puts in. "No other summer job could come close to mine in monetary terms," Diamond said of his high salary.

But Diamond only spent a few days this summer actually working and getting paid for it. He spent most of his time pounding the pavement — auditioning and waiting for calls.

Working in good commercials is great for developing acting skills, according to Diamond. He especially enjoyed working in a commercial for Panasonic radios which aired on MTV last year.

"The commercial was well done by good people," he said. He played a preppy guy who goes into a barber shop and is surrounded by people getting wild haircuts. "Things like that are more fun and offer better experience than the standard 'spokesman' commercials," he said.



DTH/Larry Childress

Reed Diamond: "Acting is an insecure field, but when it happens, it's worth it."

Diamond said he didn't get many real breaks until the end of the summer. "This summer, it all hap-

pened in the last month," Diamond said. "First I modeled for the New York Times and then nothing hap-

pened." In August, he got calls to do a few commercials. Even though the work didn't come

Carole Ferguson Campus Personality

through until August, it didn't cut into his fall semester at UNC. Commercials usually only take one 18-hour day to shoot and therefore aren't very time-consuming.

During the school year Diamond is active in the drama department. He has performed in two PlayMakers Repertory Company productions and is currently acting in and directing a Lab Theater production.

"Occasionally I fly back to New York for a job," Diamond said. But he is mainly using acting and modeling as summer jobs while he is in school.

"I'm trying to build a firm financial background over the summer." Since nothing is guaranteed in the acting field, he said he wants to be prepared for the possibility of hard times after college when he's trying to find work.

"Acting is an insecure field," he said, "but when it happens, it's worth it."

Diamond says he is fortunate to have gained so much experience in the past two years. He was performing in a high school production when two managers who happened to be in the audience signed him up. He went to his first audition and got the

part. "I thought the rest of my auditions would be that way, but it just doesn't always work," he said.

Diamond said being from New York helps, since he knows his way around and is more familiar with the business. But the key to an acting career, he says, is being well-represented. "My managers set me up with agents. Agents hear about auditions and call my managers. Then my managers call me," he explained. "I pay them 20 percent of my earnings, but it's worth it. Instead of having to read the papers for auditions, I just wait for a call."

Next summer Diamond hopes to go on to something new. He plans to go to California to work in film. "Film is really what I want to do. I want to act, and most of the work in film is in California," he said.

Diamond said film work is usually a two-month commitment — more than commercial work but less than some other jobs in acting. Diamond has been offered contracts to do soap operas in New York, but he turned them down because they usually require at least a three-year contract commitment.

Has acting turned Reed Diamond into a famous celebrity among his peers? "Well," he said, "people like to come up to me and tell me they have seen me. That's very flattering. But I don't think they treat me any differently."

Soviet dissident's book touching, but style lacks organization

To read "Alone Together," by Elena Bonner, a reader would need to know an extensive background on Bonner and her husband, "anti-Sovieteer" Andrei Sakharov. Just knowing that they are dissidents is not enough; knowing the entire life stories of the two might help piece together Bonner's sporadic book. Also knowing Russian idioms and diminutives might help.

Bonner wrote "Alone Together" during a six-month trip to the United States in 1985. As the publishers explain in a pre-text note, Bonner was not able to proofread the manuscript. "Minor changes" were made by the translator (Alexander Cook) and Bonner's son-in-law.

What a shame. Bonner should be able to see what a mess her book is. But since all her mail and telephone calls are censored and she is still exiled in Gorky, she may never see the book in print.

If she had remained out of the Soviet Union long enough to reread her work completely, she might have placed her background a bit closer to the front instead of losing it a few chapters along.

In the first chapter, she rambles about being in an airplane, about going to the OVIR (yes, whatever) for a visa, about reasons for writing a book rather than a diary, about hunger strikes, about KGB searches and confiscations, about Andrei's brilliance, about her bad health — and all that is in the first dozen pages.

The Russian names are enough to frustrate any American reader. In those same first 12 pages Bonner

Kelly Rhodes Books

haphazardly rattles off at least 18 names of friends that need a huge footnote to explain their significance. An example of these obscure references is one to "the serious Avital," who is really Natalie Shtigits Shcharansky, wife of Anatoly Shcharansky.

Finally in the third chapter, the reader gets some background information through copies of court complaints Bonner filed in a lawsuit.

The bulk of the text deals with Bonner's "illegal" trial, subsequent exile to Gorky and her rapidly declining health. The tedious day-to-day summary of events — the hunger strikes, the enemas, the KGB breaking down the door and dragging the pair to the hospital — can only be tolerated up to a point. The events are terrible, even more so for an elderly couple, but Bonner's telling them over and over, emotionlessly, is boring.

To spice up the book and to confuse the reader, Bonner drops back into the United States occasionally to tell what she did the day that she wrote the subsequent section of the book. From Walt Disney World and Florida sunshine back to Gorky cemeteries and Russian rain is too much to handle between mere paragraph breaks.

If anyone plans to read "Alone Together," it might be helpful to

know "Andryusha" and "Andryshenka" are forms of Sakharov's name that Bonner uses.

The most exciting foreshadowing that Bonner does in the entire book is to say that Sakharov has been working on his memoirs and somehow they have reached the United States. Bonner relates how the KGB kept stealing Sakharov's notes and manuscripts, forcing him to rewrite large parts of them. The memoirs will supposedly be published soon.

Bonner concludes with two chapters that cry out for re-writes. She

devotes pages and pages to the conclusion that "Americans want peace." She further decides that "what Americans want is a house. No matter what their place on the social ladder, their salary, capital, inheritance, winnings in the lottery or on the stock market, they want a house of their own." Then, "please, do not laugh at me — that's how I see it."

Bonner then rightly complains of apartment life as it is in Gorky: "I want a house! . . . I want a house. I don't want war. But Americans

want a house, too. Americans don't want war."

Finally in the last paragraph of the book, Bonner is enlightened: "But where do I get a happy ending? Maybe it's in the fact that Andryusha and I remain together . . . Yes, that must be it, the happy ending."

Yet Bonner's ending is not happy. She and Sakharov have one another, yes, but what kind of life is one in the closed city of Gorky, their guarded apartment and their altered mail? The publishers felt that "Alone Together" would raise consciousness

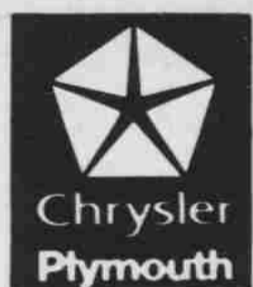
for the Sakharov's fate, and it very necessarily does.

"Alone Together" is an in-depth, sensitive and personal book. Bonner poured her heart and mind into it. She would have written more carefully if she'd had time, but that fact can almost endear the scattered text even more to the reader.

"Alone Together" would really be helpful to someone very interested in the Soviet dissidents or someone doing a report on them. Otherwise this complex book would not be worth the time.

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