

Scholarship lures foreign students to UNC campus

By ERIC CHILTON
Staff Writer

When you think of John Motley Morehead Scholars, you probably have images of students from only the United States. The scholarship recipients come from across the ocean as well.

UNC has gone abroad in its scholarship choices. There are presently 24 Morehead scholars who hail from other foreign countries, with 19 students from England and five from Canada.

They possess one of the most prestigious collegiate scholarships in the nation. However, they face the task of adapting to the United States from the moment they step off the plane.

James Dean, a sophomore from London, said preconceived notions about the American culture posed problems when he first arrived.

"Before you come over here, everyone is battering you over the head with the idea that it is going to be such a culture shock, but it was not that big of a deal," Dean said.

Dean dismissed some of his stereotypical ideas after he had been in the United States for a while.

"When I am home I find myself defending America, and wanting to come back. I really do like it here," said Dean.

Brock Dickinson, a sophomore from Toronto, Canada, said the adjustment was not very difficult for him, either.

"We follow all our television, politics and movies," Dickinson said. "Therefore, American ideas and customs are not extremely strange to us."

Brien Lewis, a freshman who is also from Toronto, said, "The adjustment was not very hard because Canadians do not view

Americans by stereotypes, due to the close cultural ties we have with the States."

While Briton Dean seems to enjoy American culture and has adjusted quite well, other English Moreheads said they found the adjustment a bit more difficult.

Victoria Spence, a freshman from Yorkshire, England, said that Southern hospitality eased her into the society, but it also created problems that hindered her adjustment process.

"It (hospitality) was very nice at first. So many people open their homes to you and are so very friendly," Spence said. "But after a while their sweetness makes you wonder if you are speaking to a real person or not."

Freshman Jeremy Kelly, who is from Elon, England, said he also had adjustment problems.

"You never really feel as though you are an integral part of the American society, so you tend to hang around with the other Brits a bit more," said Kelly.

David Hermer, a sophomore from Wales, said, "Some Brits have never, and will never, adjust to the American society."

Despite the difficulties of adaptation, Hermer said, the chance at such a marvelous scholarship was too great to pass up.

Most of those interviewed agreed that the Morehead Scholarship affords opportunities at a rich variety of experiences unlike anywhere else in the United States.

Morehead Foundation director Mebane M. Pritchett said that the scholarship, which is fairly young, holds its own against any other in the world.

"I've been the director for 15 years and I don't know of any other



Tar Heel file photo

Brock Dickinson, Victoria Spence, Jeremy Kelly and Brien Lewis are four of the 24 Morehead Scholars that hail from foreign countries

scholarship in the world that matches the total experience of the Morehead," said Pritchett.

The scholarship, which rewards its in-state recipients approximately \$5,000 per year, includes scholastic expenses and living arrangements for the school year. Out-of-state recipients receive approximately \$8,000 per year. The difference in the two grants is due to the tuition differential between in-state and out-of-state scholars.

The Morehead Foundation also provides a paid summer internship every summer for its scholars. Moreheads from foreign countries receive one free plane ticket home

per academic year.

The selection process is extremely competitive, involving more than 40 public schools throughout Great Britain and Canada. However, methods of selection are different in the United States than in England and Canada.

Dean said the whole selection process is much shorter in England than it is here.

"We all met at a hotel in London where you had one 50-minute interview and a dinner that evening," Dean said. "After dinner you get this envelope that tells you if you are selected for the last interview the next day."

Dickinson believes the Canadian

selection process has a slight advantage over the British process, because Canadian nominees actually come to the United States for their interviews.

"In Canada, the nominees go before a Morehead selection committee that conducts three interviews and then sends you to Chapel Hill for the final interview," Dickinson said. "We are exposed to the situation before we arrive for the school year."

The foreign Moreheads enjoy a summer enrichment program just as the American Moreheads do. Eight weeks of their summer are spent in a paid internship provided

by the foundation. Each scholar has a different job each summer, ranging from a position at a police department to a period of study abroad.

The foreign Moreheads, despite the cultural adjustments they must face, enjoy campus life and say they are making lasting friendships at UNC.

Have they adjusted to all the quirks of American life — from fast food hotdogs to fast-paced American pastimes? Jeremy Kelly has adjusted to UNC's favorite pastime quite well.

"I have discovered basketball to be quite interesting," he said. "Basketball is a fantastic sport."

Dull plot, weak comedy situations sink foreign film 'Decline'

When a filmmaker attempts to make light of personal subjects like sex and adultery, he risks making a jerk of himself. Denys Arcand's "Decline of the American Empire" shows a general absence of tact in dealing with such touchy issues.

Vincent Canby of the New York Times described "Decline" as a comedy about sex. The film, however, deals more with decadence than sex, and the comical elements are scarce and severely warped.

At the Saturday evening show at

Alston Russell
Cinema

the Varsity Theatre, four people walked out before the movie ended.

The plot of "Decline" resembles that of "The Big Chill" in that it focuses on the conversations of a group of French-Canadian friends. Arcand sets up the irony by placing the men in the kitchen preparing the

dinner while the women work out at the spa.

"Friends" might be a misleading term for the middle-aged self-seekers in this film. The action peaks when Dominique (Dominique Michel), the group's theoretician, talks about sleeping with Remy (Remy Girard), the hostess's husband. The mood obviously blackens from there until the end because Dominique blurts it out in front of the entire dinner party, including the hostess, Louise (Dorothee Berryman).

Another friend, Diane (Louise Portal), contributes to the spa stories with details of the sadomasochistic sex she has discovered with her new lover, Mario (Gabriel Arcand). The stories come forth after Dominique discovers the welts on Diane's back.

Another anecdote Diane offers concerns her 12-year-old daughter walking in on her in bed with a man. A flashback of this shows the bewildered girl screaming at Diane to get the man out of her bed.

The men's stories also show disregard for sex and for women as well, or men as in the case of the homosexual Alain (Daniel Briere). They indulge in their scandalous tales like writers of cheap Harlequin novels.

Remy, the classic likable slimeball, adds some questionable humor to "Decline." Director Arcand cleverly tries to inject wit into the depressing themes through Remy's role. His character is similar to those played by Michael Caine in "Blame It On Rio" and "Hannah and Her Sisters." Somehow, though, Remy's wrongdoings are not as acceptable because empathizing with Remy is not as easy as empathizing with Caine's characters.

The existence of some funny scenes probably saved the rest of the occupied theater seats from being vacated.

One amusing scene comes when the men are talking about how they despise having to dance with women all night in hopes of later favors. The men dance around and re-enact the bogus conversation they have to endure. "Woody Allen? He's my favorite. Have you read 'Shogun'?" "Acid rain? Terrible, isn't it?" "One finds this amusing only by

taking their comments at face value.

It is also entertaining to watch Mario, Diane's sadistic superman, jolt the scholarly yuppies with his crude disposition. After crashing the dinner party, Mario exhibits a lasting sneer to reflect his boredom with these stuffy intellectuals.

There are other times in the film where Denys Arcand shows his clever humor through the characters. The problem is that these few good scenes are smothered by the other tasteless material.

Arcand uses graphic language to show the frankness of the characters, an element that creates an uneasiness in some of his viewers.

The movie is in French with subtitles, but that creates no problem in following the different conversations.

Arcand displays his real talent by having his film appear as professional as other motion pictures at a fraction of the cost. One would never think that "Decline" was inexpensive because its appearance

is so professional.

"Decline" shows skillful photographic imagery. A window shot suggests Diane engaged in a masochistic endeavor while Dominique talks in the background. The subtitle reads: "Our very existence is being eroded." Intense implications for a sexual comedy.

There are also many long shots of the peaceful lakes that surround Louise and Remy's cottage.

Girard's performance is impressive compared to the mediocrity of the other actors.

"Decline" was nominated for the Best Foreign-Language Film this year, but it was no surprise to see Arcand miss the award. Some films can successfully show the humor of pretty depressing issues, but "Decline" does not rank among them.

Frankly, there are just too many superb movies showing right now to waste time trying to find the humor in "Decline."

Assault

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chance of getting to the scene while the suspect is still there.

"We will respond to anonymous calls if the victims will just stop and use a call box," Comar said. "If we can get to the scene soon enough, we can arrest someone on description alone. The important thing is to call the police immediately."

Comar said he didn't believe the man was dangerous, just confused. His behavior is not that of a rapist, he said.

Sharon McMillen, area director of Spencer, Triad, Old Well (STOW),

said the campus police were aware of the problem and had some leads. She said students needed to report incidents of assault to resident assistants or the area directors.

"The campus police doesn't have the responsibility of coming to the area directors with problems like this," McMillen said. "We (area directors) have to hear about it from the students or the resident assistants. I'm going to notify all the RA's in my area and have them inform the residents of what's going on."

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