

# diversions

**Bring the Ibuprofen** Yes, David Lynch has returned, phoenix-like, to confuse us all. Michael Anderson plays Mr. Roque in Lynch's latest mind-bender, "Mulholland Drive." ... page 7



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## Films That Did Not or Could Not Shoot in the town or at the University

- "Kiss the Girls" was not given sole use of Franklin Street by Chapel Hill officials.
- "Dawson's Creek" chose to shoot at Duke University but considers UNC a future option.
- "The Nutty Professor" wanted to shoot at UNC but filmed in Hollywood to trim the film's budget.
- "Everybody's All-American" considered shooting at UNC, but weather conditions forced the film to relocate to Louisiana.

The University developed a beneficial relationship with Hollywood, most notably on "Patch Adams" (above). But while UNC officials consider the "Patch Adams" filming a pleasant experience, some movies — like "Kiss the Girls" (below) — were not granted location rights due to their violent content.

## The Final Cut: Filming at UNC

By ELLIOTT DUBE  
Staff Writer

Hollywood can recreate many places on its many stages and sets. But sometimes it likes to go for the real thing — and when it looks for the perfect college town, Chapel Hill is usually under consideration.

As the state's film industry has grown to the point where it produced \$250 million in revenues in 2000, both UNC's architecture and the town's friendly nature have drawn filmmaker interest.

William Arnold, director of the N.C. Film Commission, said he believes the area has even more to offer besides the right look. "(North Carolina has) a willingness to consider filmmaking proposals, which a lot of other places just turn down right at the outset because they don't want to be bothered," he said.

UNC receives roughly six to 12 proposals a year, but not all make the cut. Only selected films can shoot on campus. The 1998 Robin Williams comedy "Patch Adams" was successful in doing so — the 1997 Morgan Freeman thriller "Kiss the Girls" was not.

And the requests keep coming. "The Pink House," an independent film that was written, directed and produced by UNC alumni, was denied permission to film on University grounds this summer. The crew shot much of the film in Chapel Hill in July and August.

The town isn't just attracting movie crews. The popular television series "Dawson's Creek," which airs 8 p.m. Wednesdays on the WB network, will primarily film at Duke this season. While plans to shoot at UNC are tentative, Producer David Hartley said UNC is considered as a location.

"We love UNC as well, and the town of Chapel Hill and the folks at UNC have been terrific," he said. "We just don't know until we get a script if we need to go up there. It's very possible. We shot a little thing today."



In order for any of these productions to shoot, both filmmakers and local officials must agree on the area's appropriateness. In the case of "Patch Adams," filmmakers sent location managers to scout the campus, take pictures and draw storyboards. And with the producer's approval, other crew members studied the area.

Once the crew believes in the location, the University must give its permission.

"Patch Adams" paid \$3,500 a day to shoot on campus and brought another \$3 million into the area through extra costs like lodging, supplies and reimbursements to UNC for changes it made to the campus. But as of June 2000, the General Assembly passed a bill that eliminated all fees for the use of state buildings and public property in film productions. The bill added that such property can only be reimbursed for any changes or lost revenues incurred during filmmaking. The University falls under the considerations of the bill.

So money is no longer a factor, but the University's image is. UNC always has been careful in choosing whether to allow certain film crews on campus, said

Karen Moon, broadcast manager for UNC News Services. Moon served as the liaison between the "Patch Adams" crew and UNC throughout the project.

The content of a film's script comes under major consideration. "We want to make sure it isn't something that creates a detrimental image of the University because of the nature of the project," said Susan Kitchen, vice chancellor for student affairs.

Kitchen is a member of the Chancellor's Film Review Committee, which approves filming and handles the shooting's logistics. The committee consists of UNC administrators and other departments or services affected by a production. It meets if Moon gives tentative approval of the script.

Upon script approval, the committee determines to what degree a film disrupts students' daily lives. Also, it considers opportunities for students, faculty and staff to work on the production. Preferably, students can work as extras, interns or production assistants.

The relationship between the small town and the big film industry actually began to flourish with a production that didn't make it to Chapel Hill.

Universal Studios got close to shooting "The Nutty Professor," a comedy starring Eddie Murphy, on the UNC campus. Instead, the studio chose to film at home in Los Angeles after the 1995 action-adventure "Waterworld" went vastly over budget. Arnold said that Universal wanted to control its spending.

But it was two years before Tom Shadyac, director of "The Nutty Professor," was looking at Chapel Hill again — for "Patch Adams." The film was shot throughout the campus, and both Moon and Kitchen maintained that the filming went smoothly.

But not all interested productions are as successful. UNC rejected "Kiss the Girls" because of its violent content. The leaders of Chapel Hill chose not to accommodate the film's crew.

"They wanted to film a chase scene with shooting on Franklin Street, and we don't rent Franklin Street to anybody," said Town Manager Cal Horton. The Chapel Hill Town Council cited its policy against restricting public streets to private concerns, so the crew filmed crowds in Chapel Hill by driving cameras through busy streets.

While some films struggle to get the support of the University and the town, the successful operation that was "Patch Adams" has brightened the future for filming on the UNC campus.

The studios of Hollywood and the campus of UNC might be physically separated by the entire span of the country. But from a professional standpoint, they are closer than ever.

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### Movies shot at Chapel Hill or the University

- "Patch Adams" was shot at UNC.
- "The Pink House" filmed throughout Chapel Hill.
- "Bull Durham" shot some locker room scenes in Kenan Stadium.
- "Sherman's March" filmed a segment of the film in Chapel Hill.
- "Stonebrook" filmed at Duke University and Chapel Hill.

### These Films Shot Locally, or at Least Tried to, but How Did They Turn Out?

"Patch Adams"

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Like a little barking terrier, "Patch Adams" tries so hard to get you where it hurts, but in the end, it's just a little ball of fluff.

Hunter Adams (Robin Williams) checks out of a psychiatric hospital, determined to help humankind. He heads to the Virginia Medical College (set at UNC) and clashes with his tight-lipped doctor superiors.

Robin Williams gives an earnest performance but not a particularly funny one. Williams is best off the cuff, and the scenes in which Adams amuses his patients are too scripted to suit his comedic talents.

Similarly, the theme of old-versus-new-medicine isn't a new idea. If the attempt was to show Patch's work as earth shattering, the message gets lost in the saccharin sweetness.

But it's worth it just to see paper-mache female legs propped outside the entrance to Murphey Hall in a — ahem — suggestive fashion.

"Kiss the Girls"

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Even though the book from which it's based is set in Chapel Hill, the film "Kiss the Girls" only shows a glimpse of Franklin Street because the Chapel Hill Town Council didn't permit filming in the area.

While the film's finished product (shot in Durham) is predictable and formulaic, "Kiss the Girls" still rises above typical suspense fare.

In this film Morgan Freeman plays Dr. Alex Cross, a James Patterson character that recurred in 2001's "Along Came a Spider." "Kiss the Girls" is the stronger of the two, thanks to great performances by Freeman and Ashley Judd. But it's unfortunate almost every plot point is obvious, and the police officers are mere anti-Yankee, good ol' Southern boys.

The film is unrealistic, but it still comes from the Hollywood cookie cutter characterizing the film.

"Sherman's March"

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A documentary within a documentary, "Sherman's March" is a quirky odyssey through the South, including Chapel Hill.

Filmmaker Ross McElwee wanted to trace General Sherman's path through Dixie at the Civil War's end, but instead found himself dragged down by his own solitude.

So, he turned his camera into a tool for first-person narration and filmed his every move. He comes across personalities too twisted to be fictitious, including a former high school

teacher who's rabidly trying to marry him off. The result is a hilarious, painful insight into a lonely man.

While the film is long-winded and 30 minutes too long, seeing the South's eccentricities is worth it.

By Allison Rost

