

Spanish Student Finds U.S. Youth More Mature

Young people in the United States grow up faster and are more mature than their counterparts in Spain, a student from Spain, Maria Moreno, says.

Maria is the winner of the Russell Brown Memorial Scholarship awarded by the Committee on Relations with Toledo, Spain, and is enrolled for a year's study in the College of Education.

Spanish youth must be 18 to drive, she said, and most boys do not own cars until they graduate from college. She said American young people are more independent than those in Spain, who usually live at home longer, and rely more on their parents.

Spanish girls generally do not begin dating until 17, Maria said, in contrast to many American girls who begin dating as early as 13 or 14.

Contrary to a popular American belief, Spanish young people do not have to be accompanied by "duenas," or chaperones, on dates, she said. In fact, she said, parents never meet their children's dates until they are engaged.

Most Spaniards do not realize the extent of the poverty of the lower classes in the United States, she said.

Maria said that before coming to Toledo, she thought life in America was easy, with "many opportunities to get money." She said this idea is one which the people receive from American television programs shown in Spain, such as "The Fugitive," "I Spy," "Bewitched" and "The Dick Van Dyke Show," and is a belief held throughout Europe.

Another generally held belief she said, is that white Americans oppress the Negroes. Maria adds, however, that Spaniards cannot really understand the racial problem because there are no Negroes in Spain.

Maria said coming to the United States made her more aware of the Vietnam war. As the war does not significantly affect them, most Spaniards are not involved with the sit-

uation, she said. Maria said she first became interested while visiting an American family whose son is stationed in Vietnam.

Aside from the language, Maria said the most difficult thing to adjust to in the United States was the schedule. In Spain, breakfast is served about 9 a.m., lunch at 2 p.m. and dinner at 10 p.m., she said. At the University of Madrid, she said, her afternoon classes began at 4 and continued until 10 p.m.

Maria said she dislikes the hurried pace in the United States and thinks there is so much organization in American life that people do not have the time to do the things they would like. After first arriving in Toledo, Maria said, she was rushed into so many activities stayed with so many different families and met so many people that "I felt like a thing rather than a person," she said.

Maria said her favorite foods in this country are ketchup and hamburgers. She likes the meat in the United States, which is of a higher grade than found in Spain, but said she misses the fresh fish common in the Spanish diet.

She said that in Spain, the tortilla, which is made with eggs and potatoes, is comparable in popularity to the hamburger or hot dog in America.

Maria said she also likes the folk music of the United States. One of her favorite groups is Peter, Paul and Mary. In Spain, she said, regional songs, telling of the country's past, are similar to our folk songs. Most of the popular records played in Spain are by American groups, she said.

There is no snow in Toledo, Spain, Maria said, and one of her most enjoyable experiences in the United States was a skiing trip she took over semester break.

Before going back to Spain in July, Maria said she will take trips out West and to New York and Washington. When she gets home, she plans to get a job as an interpreter or English teacher.



Maria Moreno