

The assignment: find A&M's finest

By **RUSTY CAWLEY**
News Editor

I. The Camera Never Winks
On the fifth floor of the Aggieland Inn, within a plush suite overlooking the hotel swimming pool and the neighborhood Jack-in-the-Box, a phone rings.

A lithe young woman with auburn hair, pale skin and well-placed freckles (let's rate her an 8.5.) picks up the receiver and says, in a voice that could thaw Butte, Montana, on Christmas Eve, "Good afternoon, *Playboy*."

Her name is Sherral, and before her, lettering the deep red bedspread, are notes, schedules, pamphlets, snapshots, more notes and a blue rubber ball belonging to a poodle named Pepe.

Today is Wednesday, and Sherral's job is to book this afternoon and the next three days for *Playboy* photographer David Chan. In that time, Chan will interview and assess as many members of Texas A&M's female population as he can attract to his suite.

The hook is a 3 column x 6 inch advertisement in *The Battalion*, a simple ad carrying basic information (who, what, when, where, why) and the *Playboy* logo. The bait is an opportunity to interview with and perhaps pose for a photo spread scheduled for the September, 1980 issue. The spread is entitled, "Girls of the Southwest Conference." It is

**Photos by
Lee Roy
Leschper Jr.**

intended to parade before the nation the best the Southwest Conference has to offer in . . . well, you know.

At a table in the middle of the room, Chan helps the first few fill out their application forms. The form is a brief one, printed on the face of an envelope designed to hold the snapshot Chan has asked each girl to bring. It asks the essentials: Name, age, address, phone number, hair color, cup size . . .

But, as Chan will often tell you, *Playboy* requires its women to have more than beautiful bodies. They must have an intellect as well, and the form asks for proof that each has one. It asks for a list of honors, achievements, and such.

But the most crucial line, the one almost every applicant swallows her gum over, is the one that asks if she wants to pose nude, semi-nude, or fully clothed. The barer the bod, the higher the pay. Clothed, \$100; semi-nude, \$200; completely raw-buck-in-front-of-God-and-Country-naked, \$300.

Chan doesn't pressure them. "Don't worry," he says, "It's not a contract. Put down what you feel is right. Once we start shooting, you may want to take more off, or you may want to keep more on than you thought you would. No matter. It's up to you. We don't force you to do anything you don't want to."

Shooting doesn't begin until April, when Chan returns from Chicago with a list of who is to be photographed and who is not. The applicants have until then to decide at which point their greed overcomes their modesty.

Nearby, a camera team from Bryan's KBTX-TV is busy shooting the action: the girls around the table, the poodle sleeping on the



David Chan focuses his cameras on thousands of women each year, but few reach *Playboy* magazine.

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