

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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## Mooning over Meredith

A&M grad student Lanny Lawrence vies as possible mate for ABC's 'The Bachelorette'

By Lauren Smith  
THE BATTALION

While most of the thousands of male "Bachelorette" hopefuls were putting on their charming smiles and shirts that matched their eyes for audition videotapes to be sent to ABC, "The Bachelorette" sought out Lanny Lawrence.

"A friend of mine worked for a magazine in Dallas, so she and my mother submitted me for a contest for the June issue," Lawrence said. "A lady at the casting department for 'The Bachelorette' is from Texas, and she picked up the magazine at the airport while she was visiting her family, and the producers called me soon after that."

Lawrence was named one of Dallas' "10 Most Beautiful People" in the June issue of D Magazine.

When Lawrence was contacted by ABC to see if he was interested in auditioning, he was working on his master's degree at Texas A&M.

"I was pretty hesitant to do it at first just because I didn't know the show," he said. "It took me a while to actually commit to doing it, and I thought it sounded like a fun deal, so I went ahead and tried it out."

After a series of phone interviews and several videotaped interviews with the executive producers of the show, Lanny, along with 60 other bachelors, flew to California for what was a weekend full of intense interviews.

"We did a bunch of psychological testing, like paper testing, probably 3,000 to 4,000 questions total," Lawrence said. "We had to meet with a psychiatrist, a lady who works for the FBI, who did a pretty extensive background check. There were blood tests, urine tests and filmed interviews with executive producers of the show where they asked about past relationships, our interests, if you could find love on TV, things like that."

None of the potential bachelors knew that the bachelorette was Meredith Phillips from the Bachelor-season four with Bob Guiney, and Lawrence wasn't exactly thrilled about the news.

"They showed us a video of Meredith about 24 hours before I met her," Lawrence said. "I was surprised, but I wouldn't say I was excited because she wasn't really what I expected, plus after watching the show, I knew that she didn't really care for horses and that's kind of my entire life for the past couple of years, so I was kind of worried about that. I definitely went into it with an open mind because like what I am experiencing

now, a lot of people see you on a television show and think they know you, and she was different than I thought, a pretty cool girl actually."

Lawrence said he was shocked by how emotional many of the men would get.

"It was kind of interesting to me because some of the guys were getting into her pretty quick," he said. "The whole process is sped up so I can definitely say on my side, I dealt with a lot of emotions a lot earlier than I am used to just because of the fact you are stuck there, cut off from the rest of the outside world, so all you can think about is this girl and you've got these other guys doing the same thing, talking about it all the time; it's a strange situation."

The bachelors are not allowed to listen to the radio, watch television or read books during filming. The bachelors actually only live in the bachelor pad for 12 days before it is narrowed down to the four finalists, who move into separate hotel rooms.

"I lived in the hotel for a month even after I was kicked off the show because I still had to stay so people wouldn't say, 'Well Lanny was home at this time, so he had to have gotten kicked off right here,' so I ended up having to stay the whole time."

The real boredom kicked in for Lawrence in the month he spent with an ABC 'handler,' although he said he did enjoy living in California.

After two group dates with Meredith, a one-on-one where he cooked her dinner and a date in Texas on the ranch where he works, Lawrence said he felt confident going into his last rose ceremony.

"I was surprised when I got voted off because my confidence



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Lanny Lawrence, an A&M graduate student still working on his thesis spends some quality time with Bachelorette Meredith Phillips. Lawrence made it through as one of the final four remaining bachelors.

level was pretty high; it wasn't that high at first," Lawrence said. "After I made it several rounds, I started getting pretty confident."

On abc.com, in Phillips' weekly post-show diary, she said she could hardly look at Lanny after not giving him a rose.

"I told Lanny how I felt. I definitely wanted him to know it wasn't about living in Texas and being on the ranch, because I could deal with the horses," Phillips wrote. "It was about not having enough time. He isn't a huge communicator, and neither am I."

Even though Lawrence said he remembers trying not to look

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