

# Pests busy ant-tagonizing students



They invade our homes, steal our food, and attack us. The totalitarian regimist ants will stop at nothing until they rule Aggie land. On this anthill we call campus, the ants don't just go marching one by one. They march in herds.

**ERIN FITZGERALD**  
COLUMNIST



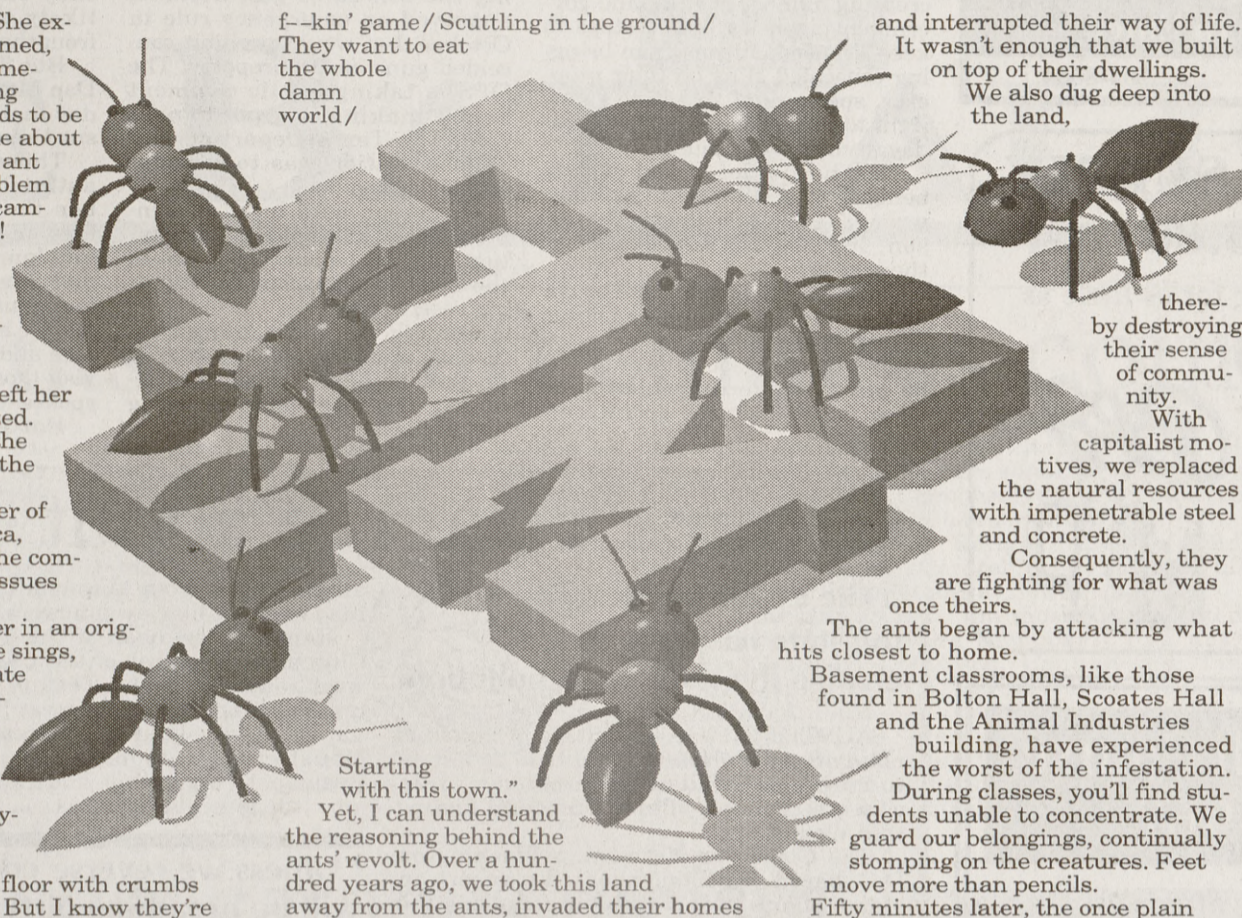
There I am sitting in the middle of class taking notes, when all of the sudden an ant crawls out of my sleeve!

The experience left her mentally traumatized.

Understanding the threat ants pose to the campus, Tarlac Williams, lead singer of the local band Indica, strives to educate the community about this issues through music.

Venting his anger in an original composition, he sings, "Ants, we f--kin' hate 'em / Ants, we mutilate them."

Near the end of the song he continues, warning, "But they're only trying to find a little snack / Cruising around the kitchen floor with crumbs held on their back / But I know they're



f--kin' game / Scuttling in the ground / They want to eat the whole damn world /

and interrupted their way of life. It wasn't enough that we built on top of their dwellings. We also dug deep into the land,

linoleum floor is speckled with ant carcasses.

Compared with our size and strength, the pests seem not to have a chance, but we may be in for a shock. Although the ant life span is short, humans can't compare with their birth rate or poisonous birthright.

Our weakness is that we underestimate the power of their venom. One ant may cause only a small irritation, but in great quantities ants become dangerous. Last spring I experienced such a case. I mindlessly laid on and aggravated an ant hill.

Within seconds my knee began to burn and sting. I stood up and find a couple hundred little red soldiers viciously attacking my leg.

My friends rushed me to the emergency room. Upon my arrival, the nurses admitted me before a man with a broken ankle. Different fluids were injected into my body as I swallowed various pills.

I spent the next month applying medicine and going to the health center to have the bites professionally popped.

The scars that remain on my leg from this experience are a constant reminder that Aggie land is on the verge of a violent war between humans and ants.

It's time we unite and take action — set aside a day devoted to extermination. The University must decide if it wants to nourish our minds or continue to nourish the ants by looking the other way.

Erin Fitzgerald is a senior political science major

# Anti-Bonfire arguments usually weak

## Opposition to Bonfire stems from misplaced environmental concerns

Certain things in life are predictable. For example, let's say your inspection sticker is expired — purely hypothetically, of course.

And, just for fun, let's say that you have avoided driving, but you just have to go somewhere on, oh let's say Monday.

If all these things are true, then it's predictable that a friendly neighborhood police officer will be driving along Southwest Parkway just as you are pulling out of your parking lot.

Hypothetically speaking, of course. Back in the real world, other things happen like clockwork. The sun will rise tomorrow — usually several hours before I want to see it.

Finals will suck, and Bonfire will burn. Of course, along with bonfire comes a whole set of other predictables. Every year, someone writes to The Battalion who is shocked to learn that we use wood in our Bonfire.

And, as sure as I'm going to have an 8 a.m. final, someone who wouldn't know a post oak from a poinsettia will cry about "burning down most of the virgin forest remaining in the Northern Hemisphere.

And we do all of this just so we can show our burning desire to beat the (bad word) out of The University of Texas ("t.u." is far too derogatory for such a fine institution)."

Then comes the predictable Aggie response, "Highway 6 runs both ways."

Next the reformist claims, "See, you Aggies are just intolerant of other opinions."

OK, time to insert fact into the argument. Let's take this one weak idea at a time.

Weak argument number one: the trees used for Bonfire come from old-growth forest.

Fact: Well, sort of. Texas A&M is located in what is called the post oak savannah. A little historical research shows this area originally was a rolling prairie with small groves of trees, mostly in creek beds.

**DAVID TAYLOR**  
COLUMNIST



Back then, prairie fires would come along every once in a while a wipe out most of the post oaks.

Of course, we prefer not to let prairie fires burn unchecked anymore, so post oaks and other species have grown at will.

In other words, our clearing for Bonfire is simply a case of doing for nature what nature used to do for itself. But I guess some people know better than nature.

Weak argument number two: The trees burned for bonfire could be used for other, more worthwhile pursuits.

Fact: Not really. Most of the wood used for Bonfire is post oak. Apparently, post oak has very few building uses. Most post oak winds up as low-quality paper, railroad cross ties or firewood.

What a handy coincidence. Furthermore, the trees for Bonfire trees came from private land slated for clearing and development.

This wood was about to become fire kindling, anyway. But hey, if anyone wants to build a house out of post oak, feel free.

Weak argument number three: Bonfire releases carbon, i.e. pollution, into the atmosphere.

Fact: Sure. Bonfire, however, should be last thing anyone is up in arms over.

As I just mentioned, fire is nature's way of cleaning up after itself. If you want to help

fight air pollution, figure out a way to increase the efficiency of fossil fuel burning engines. Some reports claim up to 70 percent of air pollution comes from fossil fuels. I wonder how much comes from Bonfire.

Weak argument number four: If you Aggies spent as much energy helping Habitat for Humanity — or anything else — as you do on Bonfire ...

Fact: It's called The Big Event. Maybe you've heard of it: The largest single service project in the country.

If there is one thing Aggies don't need a lecture on, it's providing service to each other and to the community.

As for the "Highway 6 runs both ways" argument — and it does, I just drove on it over Thanksgiving — think a bit more about it.

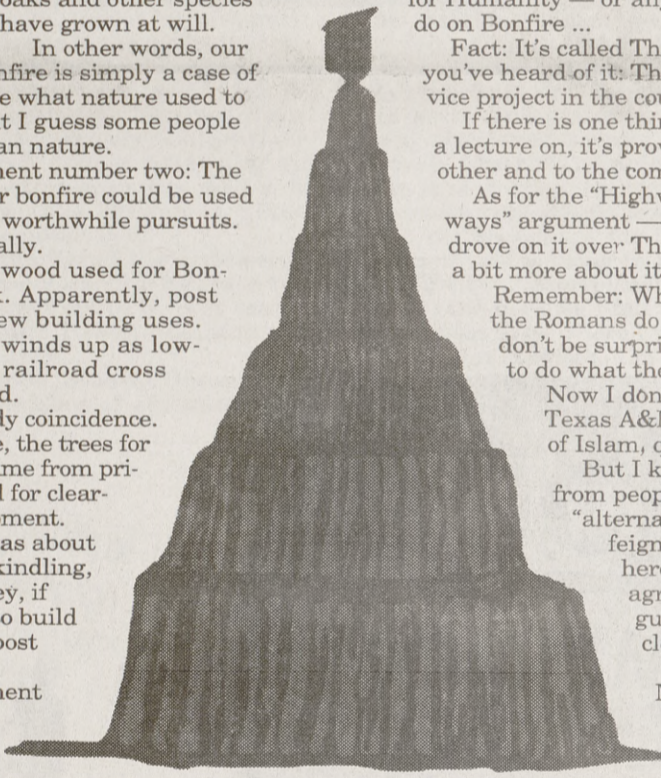
Remember: When in Rome, do as the Romans do. And if you don't, don't be surprised if they continue to do what they have always done.

Now I don't mean to imply that Texas A&M is like the Nation of Islam, quite the contrary.

But I keep reading letters from people with, shall we say "alternative viewpoints" who feign shock that most here in Aggie land disagree with them — I guess we just have closed minds.

Or maybe not. Maybe those "alternative viewpoints" we keep hearing about regarding Bonfire just need to get the facts. But then again, I guess some things are just predictable.

David Taylor is a senior management major



## THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

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## EDITORIAL

### WALK ON

#### Elephant Walk is a tradition we can all enjoy (in moderation).

We all know the story, whether or not we are upperclassmen. In Old Army days, on the day before Bonfire, seniors walked through the campus, reflecting on their years in Aggie land.

This activity evolved into the tradition known as Elephant Walk. On the day before Bonfire, seniors still gather together and prepare to walk through the campus.

During the walk, seniors do not talk. This is because Elephant Walk is a solemn occasion intended for quiet and thoughtful reflection.

Through the years, juniors — who probably regret it when it comes their turn — have started a new tradition to accompany Elephant Walk and disrupt the peace: groding out the seniors.

Juniors lie in wait around the campus, armed with food-stuffs and various substances designed to make a mess.

When the elephants approach, the juniors leap out of their hiding spots and soil the

clothing, hair and faces of the seniors, not only disrupting this solemn occasion, but wreaking havoc all over Aggie land too.

But why shouldn't they? Aggie land is filled with traditions which are extremely solemn and militaristic. There are other occasions to remain quiet, like Silver Taps or Aggie Muster.

Elephant Walk, and Bonfire after it, give students a chance to have a little fun. This is college, after all.

In recent years class councils have encouraged a return to the Old Army style of Elephant Walk, and the tradition has been cleaned up considerably.

This is beneficial for the tradition and the campus, but it need not be carried to an unhealthy extreme.

Surely there is a happy medium between complete silence and complete chaos.

We can have fun without trashing everything in sight. Have fun, but don't go overboard.

All students should think a moment on the solemn occasion of Elephant Walk. Then get ready for the mess.



## MAIL CALL

### NAACP intended to grab attention

In a time that sees this campus sitting on a racial powder keg waiting to explode, why would the NAACP choose the promotional strategy that it is using to promote its upcoming program?

I believe anyone who has taken a marketing class would agree that a successful promotional campaign should grab the attention of the intended audience, which happens to be white students who may feel they are experiencing the effects of affirmative action.

Stereotypes do exist. Accentuating stereotypes, however, does not necessarily mean promoting them, as was suggested in Elizabeth Preston's Nov. 29 column.

So what makes this different than the insensitive and down

right scandalous situation that involved the College Republicans? Well, the fliers are designed to raise a question, not to make a statement, and the NAACP will not run away from its responsibility to educate people at its program Thursday night.

But why is the NAACP always so angry, you may ask? Why not? We have met with every administrator on campus concerning racial issues, and we have never claimed a victory.

Maybe we're just asking for too much. It has been explained to me by campus officials that A&M would love to drop the good old boy label, but then the good old boys may stop giving us their good old money.

So the good old NAACP should just keep its mouth shut and let young, caring white students fall victim to one of A&M's most sacred traditions: Racism.

I don't think so. Not while we

still have breath in our bodies and money in our bank account.

So, I challenge you to go against the norm and attend an NAACP function. Show that spirit that makes A&M so great.

You may get laughed at, and you may have hell to pay, but you will be a better person for it.

Shawn Williams, president  
Texas A&M Chapter of NAACP

### Elephant Walk a solemn tradition

In Old Army days, Elephant Walk was a way for seniors to remember their college days and all the good and bad times they had experienced together.

In recent years though, the tradition of Elephant Walk has been marred by "groding," or trashing of the seniors.

Unfortunately, groding itself has become a tradition, which results in the trashing of the seniors, as well as widespread vandalism to cars, personal property and even Kyle Field.

Even though Elephant Walk is suppose to be a fun time, it is also a solemn time. We would not trash Reveille or Sul Ross or any other symbol of Aggie pride or tradition.

The Class of 1997 is trying to clean up E-Walk. We wish to leave it to seniors, as it should be.

Please remember juniors that when you purchased your shirt, you signed that you "understood the meaning behind this great tradition and promised to respect it as you would want others to respect your Elephant Walk next year."

Please juniors, don't trash the tradition!

Julie McConathy  
Class of '97  
Shannon Habgood  
Class of '97  
Fund raising committee chair

Editor's note: All 1421 juniors who purchased E-walk shirts signed a contract promising to respect the tradition.

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student ID is required. Letters may also be mailed to:  
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