

As seniors approach graduation, many find themselves saying...

Take this class and shove it

By Jesse Wright
THE BATTALION

Look in any medical dictionary and one will find many terms for various illnesses, from ancylostomiasis to zymotic papilloma. But, between seneciosis and sensorineural deafness, one will not find any mention of a plague that affects many of the academically inclined: senioritis.

Senioritis is a condition that distresses upperclassmen of academic society. Although it may afflict some who have been in school for as little as three years, the most common cases involve those who have been enrolled in a scholastic institution for four or more years.

Symptoms of senioritis include disregard for grades and declining class attendance. These symptoms often are prompted by the closing of a semester coupled with an upcoming graduation date. The prospect of never using a scantron again, never worrying about the lead weight of pencils or not having a book depreciate in value by 90 percent the moment it is purchased is very appealing to many seniors.

Although there have been some mild cases of senioritis affecting high school-aged youths, the most serious cases occur among college students. Rachelle Scott, Class of 1999, recalls her struggle with the condition as a student at Texas A&M.

"I had senioritis from 1999 until winter of 2001," Scott said. "I was supposed to have graduated in '99, but didn't until '01. It was a slow slope down grade-wise. I started out shooting for the head of the class, but towards the end, I was just doing enough to get by."

In some extreme cases of senioritis, the afflicted do not even do enough to get by.

Travis Holladay was a biology major with 86 hours of higher learning under his belt. But, as he approached his would-be final semester at Texas A&M in the winter of 2001, senioritis got the best of him.

"It became too much for me," Holladay said. "I was only going to about two classes a week, and my grades were real bad, except in chemistry. But even that was just because I had taken the class like eight times before."

Much like Scott, Holladay claims his grades started out good at the beginning of his college career, but as senioritis slowly set in, they became worse. This effect is common among many sufferers of senioritis such as Jeremy Annis, Class of 2000.

"My first years in college, I got mostly A's and B's in all my classes," Annis said. "But by my last semester I got one B, a C and two D's."

Annis cites the causes for the low grades of his last semester at A&M as a combination of apathy and a lack of class attendance.

Both Annis and Scott graduated, which proves senioritis is not a terminal illness. It can be beaten, but it often takes hard work and determination, two attributes that at many suffering from senioritis may find hard to muster.

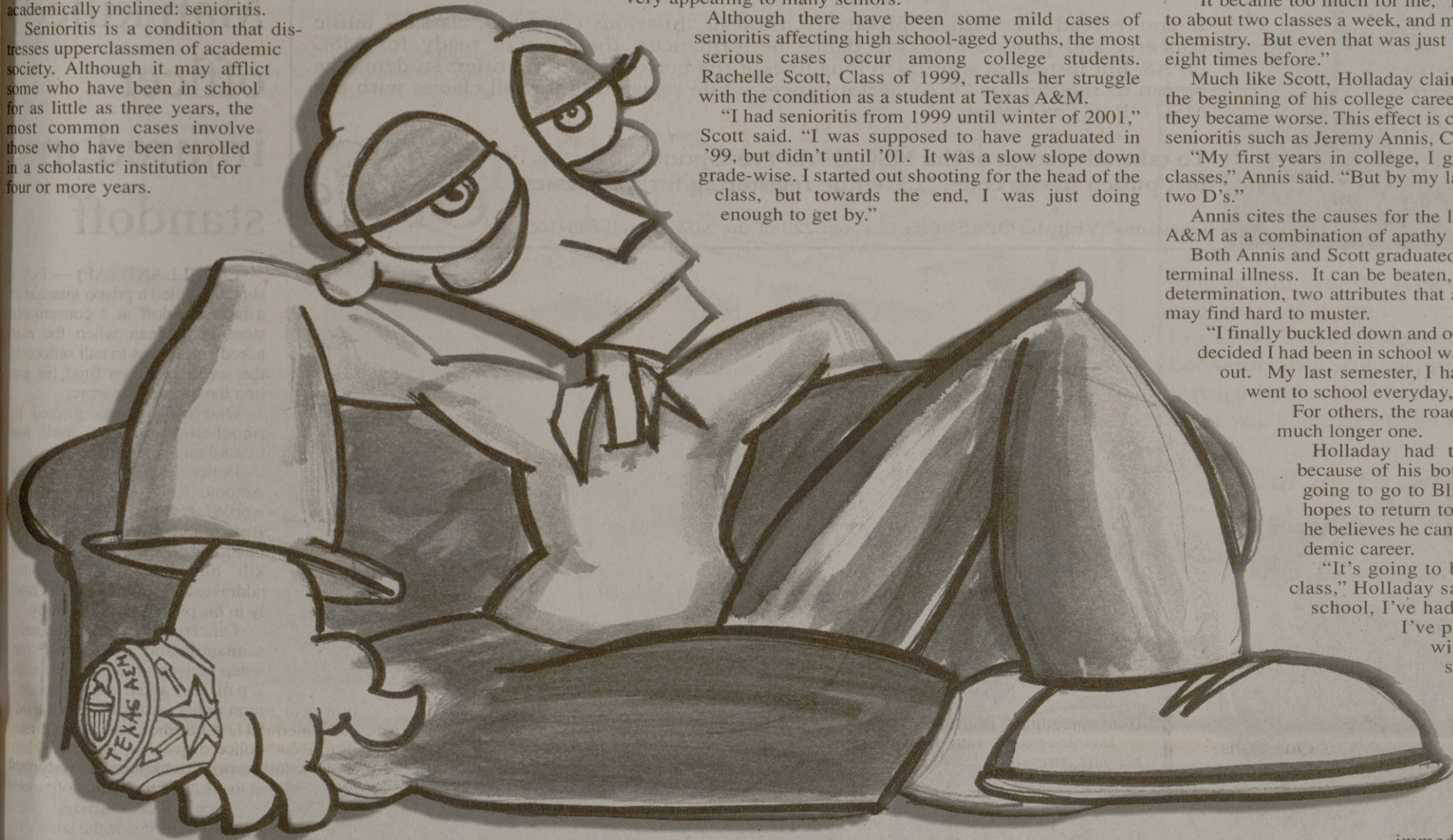
"I finally buckled down and overcame senioritis," Scott said. "I decided I had been in school way too long and I was ready to get out. My last semester, I hardly ever went out at night and went to school everyday, and I finally graduated."

For others, the road to recovery from senioritis is a much longer one.

Holladay had to quit school for a semester because of his bout with senioritis. He said he is going to go to Blinn College this summer, and he hopes to return to Texas A&M in the fall. He said he believes he can kick senioritis and finish his academic career.

"It's going to be tough studying and going to class," Holladay said. "But since I've been out of school, I've had to work 40 hours a week, and I've picked up some good habits that will help make me more responsible, like having to go to a place and actually going everyday. Hopefully I can apply that to class."

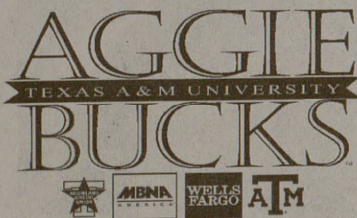
Senioritis survivors often go on to live regular, even successful, lives. Once they cross the stage at graduation, the illness goes into immediate regression, leaving only small, yet visible, scars on college transcripts.



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