Photo of the Day | Cheering in a new week



Students support the women's hockey team during the Hockey East Championship quarterfinals on Saturday, Feb 28. 2025. The Huskies won the game 6-1.
PHOTOS BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

You Should Find A New Study Spot: It's time to get creative

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With the unrelenting snow that has blanketed Storrs, Conn. this second semester, the walls of my dorm room and Homer Babbidge Library may just be able to know my entire life story. Seriously, if someone's out there controlling the weather, they're playing a cruel and unusual trick on me. Instead of having the fervent want to journey to miscellaneous sites and plop myself there, I've been cooping myself up in the dark crevices of our cubical library and banging away at my keyboard. Oh, I've been efficient, but at the price of seclusion and boredom. As a Fine Arts major, this truly is counterintuitive to my workstyle, so despite my current disdain towards getting out of my dorm, I've been thinking a lot of the warmer, nostalgic days when wandering was encouraged.

A pastime, so simple and pure, that I had in the first semester was that of exploration. Following classes that were not located near the library (i.e. the lobby for studiers), I found myself embarking on side quests to "unlock" more of the UConn open world. With a backpack equipped and spirit full, I ventured out into campus and found myself at a mystical new checkpoint: the greenhouse. Petite, charming and nestled between bricks, I quickly found a new study spot perfect for the everyday tasks of reading, writing and creating. Now I understand the buzzing of the bees and the sway of the careening sunflowers may distract someone else from the tasks they must fulfill to beat the final boss (finals), but for me, I found solace in my mind here. Thoughts fluttered like the humble monarch butterfly which poked around the flowers in the zephyr.

You see, as opposed to the dingy, dark basement of Homer Babbidge, my mind felt free. In the words of Bob Marley, a consistent friend of mine while I studied, "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery / None but ourselves can free our minds." Humans, I believe, are physically responsive to the spaces we occupy. There's a reason many spend their allotted vacation time at beaches. Simply, open scenery is calming. The waves are predictable, so the mind is at ease. When at a sporting venue, say Gampel Pavillion, a person gets rowdy to a point of transformation: perhaps we act more like another being than our own authentic self. We assimilate to the environment, one that is louder, more passionate and prideful.

When I subject myself to a four-by-four table within a building built like a fallout shelter (all dusty, brutalist and overly methodical) I am putting my mind into a space that will accept an attitude of disdain for my work. I will capitulate to the will of my pencil, and it will no longer be an arm that is intended to foster the creative soul.

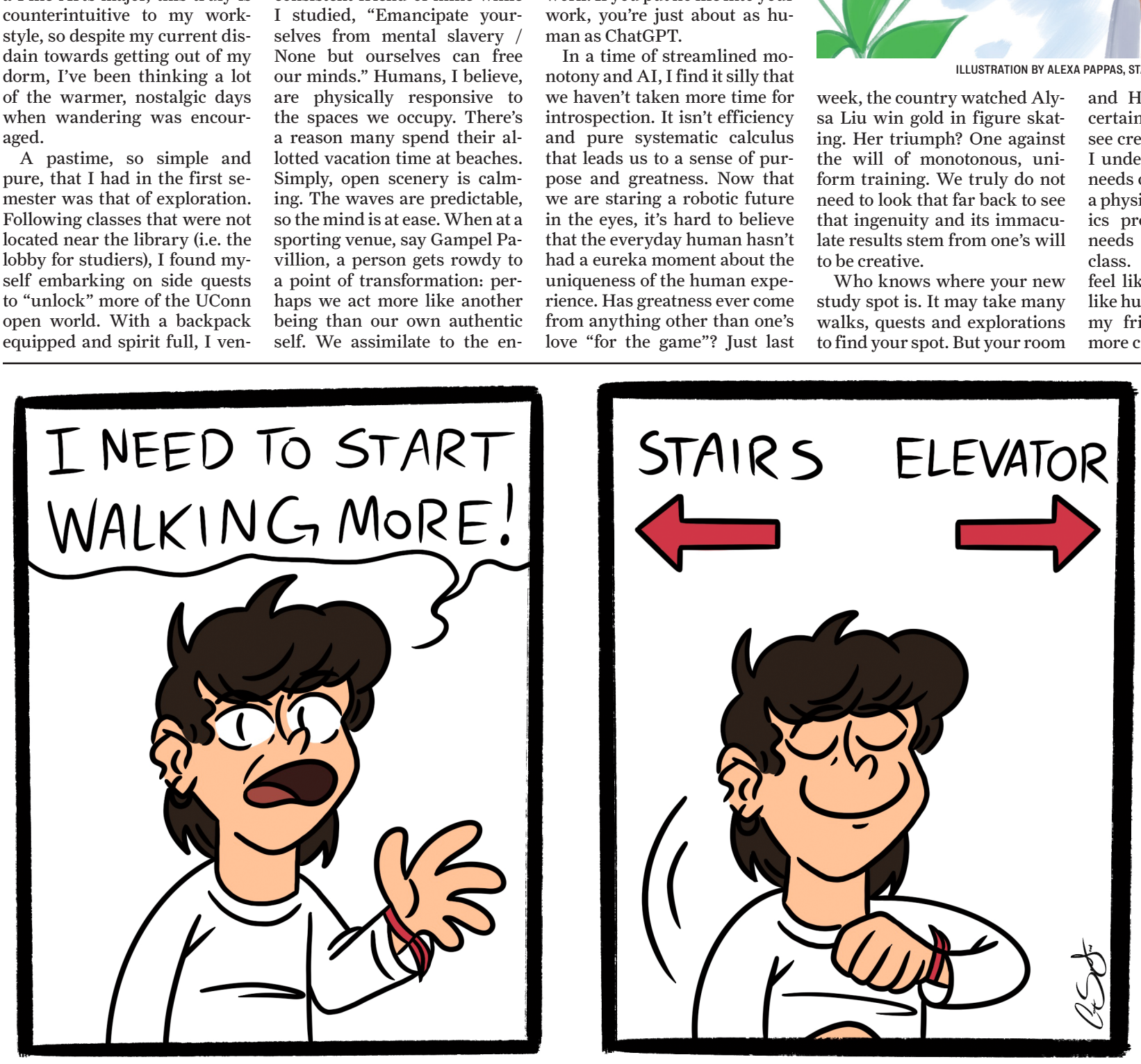
Going back to the greenhouse, it is easy to see why a place like that does not just foster cacti and perennials but also solace and peace of mind. The greenhouse is my creative study space, and it may not be for you, but it is vital that where we study breathes life into our work. If you put no life into your work, you're just about as human as ChatGPT.

In a time of streamlined monotony and AI, I find it silly that we haven't taken more time for introspection. It isn't efficiency and pure systematic calculus that leads us to a sense of purpose and greatness. Now that we are staring a robotic future in the eyes, it's hard to believe that the everyday human hasn't had a eureka moment about the uniqueness of the human experience. Has greatness ever come from anything other than one's love "for the game"? Just last week, the country watched Alysa Liu win gold in figure skating. Her triumph? One against the will of monotonous, uniform training. We truly do not need to look that far back to see that ingenuity and its immaculate results stem from one's will to be creative.



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXA PAPPAS, STAFF ARTIST

Who knows where your new study spot is. It may take many walks, quests and explorations to find your spot. But your room and Homer Babbidge Library certainly are not the places to see creative results of any kind. I understand that not all work needs creative juice. Sometimes a physics problem is just a physics problem: busy work that needs to get done before next class. However, we shouldn't feel like robots; we should feel like humans. So go on a journey, my friends. Make this world more creative.



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