Photo of the Day | Happy Friday :D



A student enjoys studying downtown at the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation Pavilion. PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

GIRL, UNINTERRUPTED:
NONCHALANCE IS AN EPIDEMIC

FILE LOGO / THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Gianna Cassino
ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR
SHE/HER/HERS
gic23015@uconn.edu

Being perceived as nonchalant almost cost me my job.

That's a gross exaggeration, but it's a fun story nevertheless: When I got the call that I was to be hired as Associate Opinion Editor, I was convinced I was about to be rejected. In an effort to not sound too eager and thus spare my editor-in-chief the pain of crushing my hopes and dreams, I picked up the phone and attempted a calm demeanor to the point of near-monotony. After learning I'd gotten the job, I was still stuck in nonchalant-mode, and my response came out sounding vaguely uninterested. In our first meeting with the new editorial board, my EIC (who I'm now also lucky enough to call my friend) remarked that I "had the most nonchalant response out of everyone The Daily Campus had hired."

I did not take that lightly. This is something that, to this day, keeps me up at night. If you know me (or if you've read at least one of my articles), you'd know that I am anything but nonchalant.

Nonchalance has become increasingly common in younger generations — I'd go so far as to call it an epidemic — primarily thanks to, you guessed it, social media. Realizing that your every move could be recorded and replayed for eternity is no small feat. One common coping mechanism for this so-called "digital panopticon," as I've explored in an previous edition of this column, is an obsession with fame as a perceived method to reclaim control. The other end of the spectrum? Extreme nonchalance.

In theory, constant nonchalance offers immunity to mass humiliation. If you get sniped in the background of a video with a neutral demeanor, what can be said about you? What can be mocked? If you appear not to care about anything, there should be no need for an insult.

Ironically, our common performance of nonchalance (waiting before responding to texts, subduing your emotions and keeping conversations at surface level) is a demonstration of caring too much. Intentionally affecting indifference is a defense mechanism against constant surveillance. By playing too much defense, however, you're also stripping yourself of your ability to connect with others. Deliberately making yourself appear indifferent means you also appear utterly uninteresting and unlike yourself. Although you may be disengaging from people who would think badly of you, you're also preventing connections with the world as a whole.

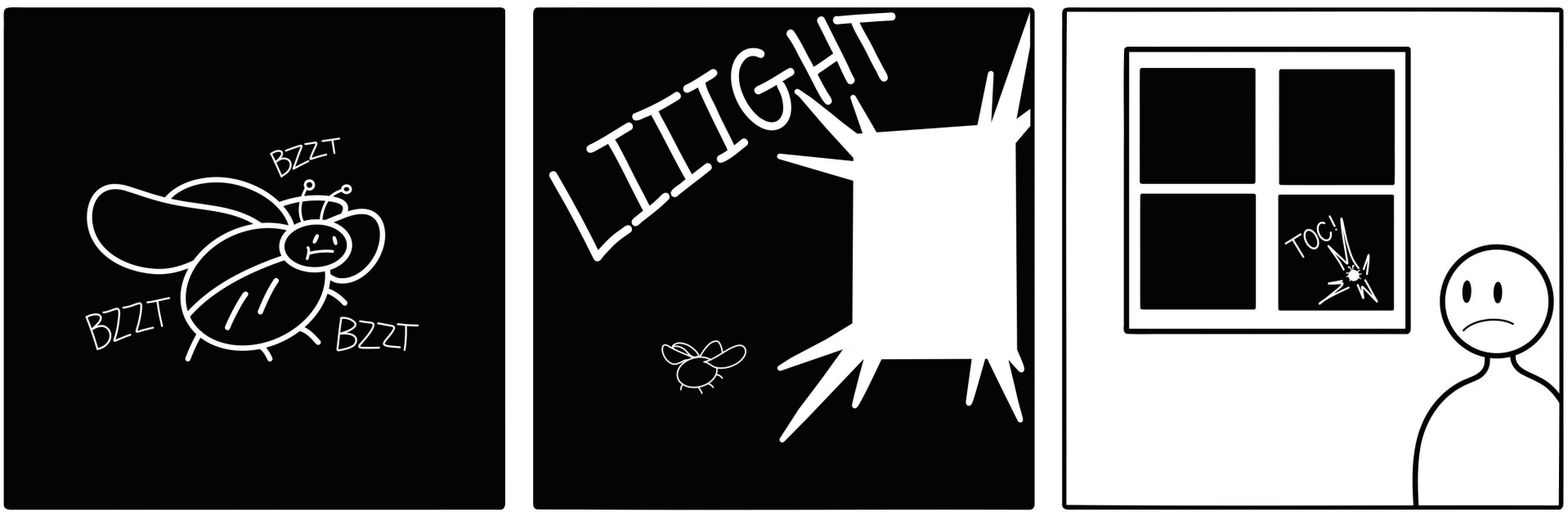
Yes, making the commitment to be the most authentic version of yourself can be difficult and embarrassing. But at the end of the day, we all live on a floating rock, and embarrassment is entirely internal. The notion that any form of love (for your friends or a hobby or the world) should be hidden because it's "too cringey" needs to go. There's no reason for people to be embarrassed to tell others what they enjoy or how much they enjoy it. I don't care if you write fanfiction or know who won the world series for the past hundred years or whatever it is that you care about but are too ashamed to publicize. More people than you think share your interests; many of them are just too scared to be open about it!

As I'm sure you might have guessed, one of my interests is writing, and I'm done being nonchalant about it. If you want to connect with people, nonchalance isn't an option. So, I'll continue to be loud and wrong and a complete geek in service to my authentic self. Loving too loudly and making stupid mistakes is what makes us human.



"Nonchalant" is an adjective that describes someone who is relaxed, calm and unconcerned, often acting as if they do not care or are not worried about anything. Nonchalance has become increasingly common in younger generations.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISTOCK



COMIC BY CAMERON COHAN, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS