

# A penny saved is a waste of time

by Ip Se Dixit  
(Gary Davis)

It is time to clean up my room.

It is in a state of "Unspeakable squalor", as my friend so colourfully put it in the yearbook writeup way back in 1966. Derek can always find the right words.

How can I avoid the display of laundry and junk that always litters my bureaus, my filing cabinet, my floor and any chair or cardboard box that happens to be in my room for any purpose? (The chair may have wandered into my room to help me fix a burnt-out light, or the cardboard box may have contained - or still contains - books and old magazines saved for no reason but nevertheless saved from the time of my last moving.)

I sorted through old credit cards (if I destroyed some I am sure my debts would be fewer) and old post cards (here is one from the Charterhouse Motor Hotel outside Boston, mailed to me by my mother, from Halifax) and old birthday cards (this one is a bit lewd, it arrived late from my friend in Montreal) and old index cards (from one of my hopeless attempts to get organized) and old business cards (here is one Ken gave me before he went to Oxford). As I sorted through the mess of cards and papers and magazines and receipts and cancelled cheques, I suddenly awakened to the fact that the horizontal surface area of my room rivals that of the K-mart parking lot, or perhaps more similarly the wild maze of levels that makes the Engineering Building at UNB such a phenomenon of design. By thinking of eliminating this haven for useless archiva I may have struck upon the solution to my escalating paper problem. I should destroy my furniture and build steep-angled obstacles in my room.

The extreme solution is not often one which appeals to me most but this, obviously, was a case requiring radical reform. My reactionary conscience on the one hand held me back, but my radical arms pushed my militant digits into action. I began to clear my furniture of junk, emptied my drawers (on the floor, for now, since I could clean up that simpler mess when the main moving was done), and moved my furniture out into the hallway. I took six little wooden legs I once bought and screwed them onto the bottom of my box spring. I dismantled my bedstead and put it out in the hall with my chest of drawers and bureau and mirror. Then I set myself to the task of restoring order to my room, discarding the old and useless paper and junk, but retaining what was needed to assure the smoother-functioning of my life. (I kept, for example, a couple of small tables, two alarm clocks, a lamp, and of course, my trusty bed, transformed by the divestiture of the headboard into a simple but equally functional medium as it was before.)

Now: what of destroying the furniture and building the steep-angled obstacles to prevent a future accumulation of paper? Well, I thought, perhaps I was a bit hasty. It would suit me better to dispose of the old furniture in a more positive way, by selling, or trade, so that the proceeds could be applied to some other need in my life, a new painting, perhaps, or a new record, or a new book, or all of these. (As I had not yet evaluated my newly-evicted furniture I had no idea of its worth.)

What medium will provide me with a speedy route to some person who, in the reordering of his own life, found a need for a bed, a chest of drawers, and a bureau with a large plate-glass mirror? Perhaps I could draft the assistance of my roommate and lug the lot to the street and appeal to the wishes of passers-by. No, in Fredericton this practice, while direct and convenient for me, is not accepted by the people and,

more immediately important, the police. I must exhibit some reserve and display my wares more subtly.

Of course! It should have occurred to me at first. Of course! I slapped my forehead in astonishment at my sudden inspiration. The Brunswickan! I can advertise in the Brunswickan!

(To the reader, who has persevered and no doubt will continue to the end of this story, the Brunswickan is in his hand and is an obvious fact. But to me, especially in my uninspired state and with a heavy cold and surrounded by a huge mountain of rubble and rubbish, the Brunswickan was not the most obvious place to dispose of my furniture. The Brunswickan, it is true, is a place where one can easily dispose of excess thoughts, and sometimes emotions, but it is not a place one would ordinarily think of to rid himself of fine furniture. Not me, at any rate.)

I dug through my hoarded life's-product, and came to the item I needed. In my copy of the Student Directory (perhaps, next to the Brunswickan itself, the most-read publication at the University), I found the telephone number of the Brunswickan. 475-5191. I dialled carefully, in order to avoid the agonizing need to have to dial again in the event of a wrong number. (It is the 9's that get me. I can't stand the infinite wait for the 9 to finish undialing itself. Push-button telephones were built for me, I think.)

"Brunswickan," someone said. "My name is Gary Davis," I said in my most businesslike tone. My tone was more nasal than usual because of my cold, but it was, nevertheless, somewhat businesslike.

"Yes?" asked the voice on the other end of the line. "I would like to place an advertisement in your classified section," I said. "Could you tell me the cost, please?"

"How long is your ad?" the voice said, somewhat arrogantly, I thought. "Well, I don't know," I said. I was losing my businesslike tone and my composure. I had not expected this question. "I haven't written it yet."

"Well, hadn't you better write it before you place it?" the voice said, somewhat more arrogantly than required. It was a very condescending voice, actually, and I wished I could do something about it, or at least I wished I could extricate myself from this hopeless situation. I madly doodled on the directory (on the page for people's names and numbers, which on mine was blank), in vain trying to compose some kind of advertisement. Perhaps, I thought in panic, I could make him think I had one all along. I failed. Bed. Bureau. Chest of drawers. For sale. 454-5800. What else? My name, Davis. O my God, I thought. Oh God, I couldn't think of the price! What price did I want?

"Hello? Are you still there?" the voice asked plaintively. "Yes, I'm still here." I was in complete panic. "I'll call you back." I hung up.

I ran to the bathroom and wiped the perspiration from my forehead. I paced. (Sometimes I pace.) I looked at the bed, at the bureau, at the chest of drawers. What price furniture, I thought.

I tried to order my thoughts. I sat on the bed. I stood up. I'll base the price on the original cost, or something. In the ad I could quote what I would like to get, or I could quote what I really expect to get. I suppose they are two different things. Let's see. The box spring and mattress cost me \$90. The furniture cost me \$140. That's \$230 new. I guess I could expect to get \$60 for the box spring and mattress, since it's 54 inches wide and I only got it last June. Then half price for the other stuff, since it's a couple of years old. That's 60 plus 70. I doodled. \$130. That's a fair price.

Maybe \$125, just to make it appealing. I'll call the Brunswickan again. 475-5191. "Hello?" said a girl's sweet voice. "Is this the Brunswickan?" I asked, hopefully. "No, you have the wrong number." She hung up. Dam, I moaned. 475-5191. "Brunswickan." It was my icy-voiced friend. "I would like to place an ad?" I heard myself ask it and I knew that my battle was already lost. "What kind of ad?" "Classified." "How big is it?" "I don't know." "You don't know?" "No, but it's quite small." I was almost pleading with him. In retrospect, I think I was asking for mercy. "Well, our student rate is \$1.20 for a column inch." "Aha! I now knew the rate!" "How many words in an inch?" I asked. I was on the offensive. I had him on the run. "Oh, about thirty or forty." I could tell he was in a complete panic. I glanced at my notes, and realized that my ad only had about fifteen words. I hung up. I rummaged through my room, looking for other things to sell. I had to make up fifteen or twenty-five more words of copy. My tongue, or fingers, seemed tied. As always, I was at a complete loss for words. Then I hit a gold mine. My movie equipment! I composed. For sale. Box spring, mattress, bedstead, 54 inches, matching bureau and chest of drawers, almost new. \$125. Also movie equipment. Fujica camera, nearly new, \$40. Atlas-Warner editor, \$30. Call Davis, 454-5800. With victory in sight, I called again. 475-5191. It was busy. Nervously I waited five minutes. It seemed like an hour. 475-5191.

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## VIEWPOINT

### should students be allowed in the faculty club?



ruth carroll  
arts 1  
"I think students should be allowed in... as chaperones (yea GOD)"



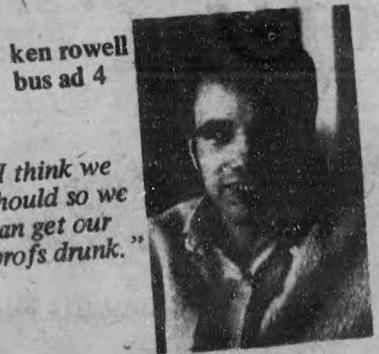
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"No. Students have their own facilities; besides the faculty need their privacy."



bob kay  
"No. I think the faculty deserves a little privacy."



carl weldon  
bus ad 4  
"Students should have their own LICENSED club."



ken rowell  
bus ad 4  
"I think we should so we can get our profs drunk."

john white  
arts 1

"I don't see why students should want to really."



melanie giberson  
arts 2  
"It's their club and it should be reserved for them."



joyce mountain  
sci 3  
"Most students probably haven't heard of it."



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aniel M. Weston

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day 9 - 11:30;  
- 4:30.

HE SUB BALLROOM.