Shall we trash it out?

By Joanne MacKinnon

Before classes, I stop at the student lounge in Robertson Library for a coffee and a little conversation with friends.

I push a collection of coffee cups, half-eaten sandwiches, newspapers, and other objects either unidentifiable or unmentionable out of my way to sit down. The others seem totally oblivious to the mess (probably adapting well to their environment.)

Several minutes later, a member of the cleaning staff (a rather frustrated-looking member of the cleaning staff) attempts to climb around the student bodies to collect the garbage.

When I leave my class an hour later, there is a similar mess.

It would seem that our ivory towers of higher education are well on their way to becoming junkyards. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the garbage and dirt that infests our campus.

During the winter it is understandable that the floors become swamplike with snow, slush, and mud.

It is rather distasteful, yet understandable.

It is the unnecessary mess that I find particularly offensive.

People are no longer accepting responsibility for their trash. We assume that because there is a cleaning staff, it is their responsibility to clean up after us, instead of our own.

It would be extremely servile of us to put our empty coffee cups in the garbage. And besides, the union might object, right?

Wrong.

Our rights as students do not include being slobs, writing graffiti, or showing a marked lack of common courtesy to other people.

It is merely courteous to clean up after oneself. The effe it would take to put one's garbage in its proper place (garba cans) is minimal, yet no one seems to do it.

Or at least, enough people don't do it to make the campus a mess.

It is not only the lounge that suffers from this general disrespect, but the classrooms, the cafeteria, and all other inhabited areas of the campus.

I don't enjoy sitting beside unidentifiable or unmentionable refuse, or discovering half way through a lecture that I've sat on the yogurt that the person before me spilt.

I don't like litter, and I especially don't like other people's litter.

It would seem that garbage cans are placed around campus for a purpose, not mere decoration — although I do admit they are lovely to look at.

So why don't we use them? It may be part of the rebellious streak that university students are supposed to have. Instead of fighting the establishment, we now deface the property of the establishment.

Somehow, I don't believe that the students of UPEI are organized and attempting to make a strong political statement about the establishment, university politics, or life in general.

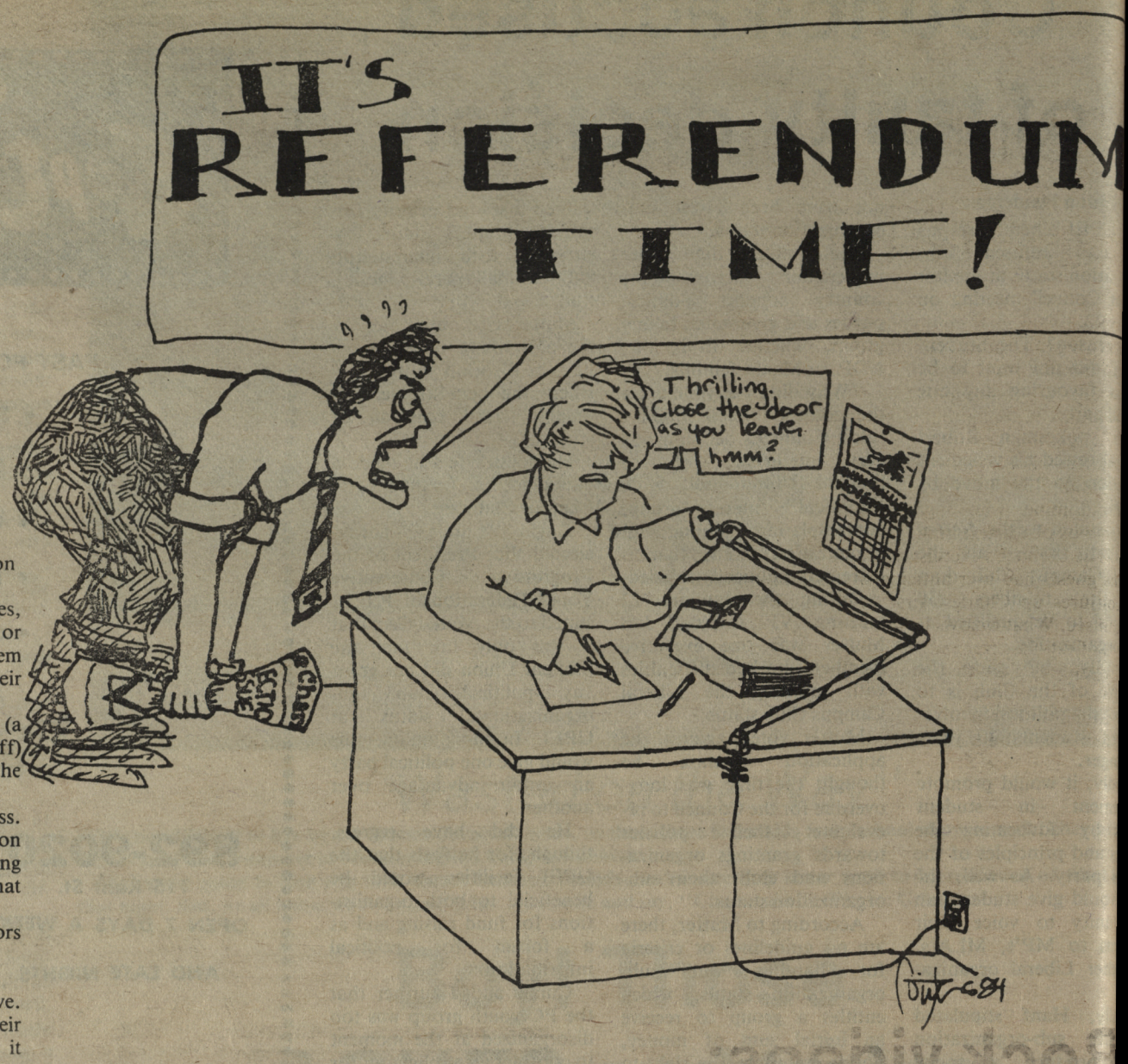
The alternative answer is a lack of concern, not only for the rights of others, but also for one's environment.

I consider the university in many ways my own. I am part of this community and the buildings I work and relax in are important to the amount of pleasure I obtain from my activities here.

It is difficult to be inspired in such disorder. The atmosphere we work in is important to the work we do. An unwillingness to care about this environment reflects more than a disrespect for the cleaning staff.

I want to study, work, and socialize in clean, neat areas, not surrounded by other people's trash. It seems absurd that anyone would wish for anything else.

Who knows — if the cleaning staff weren't always cleaning up after us, they might have time to do something about the floors.



LETTERS

CIMN does good snow jobs

Dear Editor:

I am writing in reference to the article in the Jan. 19 issue of the Netted Gem in which the question was raised of what to do in cae of a snowstorm at UPEI.

On the morning of the recent snowstorm, I came in early for my job at CIMN Radio to inform students as to what they should do.

I first contacted the Registrar's office, and found that no classes had been cancelled as of eight a.m.

I then contacted Bill Stafford at the Charlottetown Weather Office.

At eight a.m., CIMN began its daily programming. I made sure that Bill Harwood (the disc jockey who was working that shift) had all of this information. Anyone listening that morning was advised to leave the car at home, because the parking lots were not plowed.

We also suggested that if it wasn't entirely necessary to come to classes, people shouldn't.

As the morning progressed, we continued to broadcast weather forecasts and class cancellations as they were reported by the Registrar's office. There were none, even though the Registrar's office is the place to contact in the event of a snowstorm.

Unfortunately, although some professors did not come to the university, none contacted the proper authorities.

When professors did show up for classes gave them the "Uuuuuuuummmmm missed classes!"

At eleven o'clock received official notifi that classes would be celled at eleven-thirty.

Students living off c who have FM Cable ca into CIMN at eight a receive vital informat the event of a snowstor

Sincerely,
Bob Stanley, CIMN Ne Director

Seniors so

This is in respons complaint received Senior class last week.

I would like to ap to those persons wh offended by the post the last Senior class m held on January 25, 19

It was made appare the advertising tec of some of the poste not too appropriate.

Sincerely,
Patrick M. Swift
Senior Class V.P.

The Netted Gem

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Staff

And now for the next spine-tickling episode of the never-constant, always ephemeral, but undoubtedly perfect staff of the UPEI Netted Gem! These pomme de terre connoisseurs include John Dougan, Sharon Leighton, Karen McLenithan, Joanne MacKinnon, Jonathan Orlowski, Parker Grimmer, Gus Hillstrom, Howard Beattie, Leah Parker, Ruth Edgett, Mickey Place, John Pendergast, David Doiron, and editor Carolyn Ryan.

The *Netted Gem* is the weekly student newspaper of the University of Prince Edward Island. Views expressed therein are not necessarily those of the Student Union. We reserve the right to edit copy for space, style, or legal reasons. Letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, and submitted before noon on Monday. Letters exceeding 500 words in length are prone to cutting and much abuse by the collective staff. All letters must be signed by their author(s). Our office is located on the fourth floor of the Main building. Our telephone is 892-4121, extension 387. The *Netted Gem* is now a full member in semi-good standing with Canadian University Press.