

Informal recycling

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I was on my way somewhere yesterday when I met a homeless

man doing some informal recycling. He was one of these people who I think has unfortunately become institutionally homeless and probably prefers being homeless (surprising but true). We had quite a chat about his haul of informal recycling. What never ceases to amaze me is what and how much people throw away. Almost everything he had in his very large holdall bag, suitcase and other smaller bag had been found in various bins. This next bit is a little like the conveyor belt on the "Generation Game" (for those who can remember that). Those who cannot look it up. The haul included; A brand new looking shower radio shaped like a fish (with batteries still in it was loud) with a cord attached to dangle it from the shower or taps. A down sleeping bag and something to make a bivvy bag. Foodstuffs (slightly more dodgy this) consisting of two half eaten apples and a complete tub of crème fraiche. We had a chat about use by dates and using our nose. The man also dug out a complete set of wooden blinds which he was loath to part with (or at least put back), but had no use for. He asked me if I wanted them. I declined having no use for them. They looked perfectly OK though. When I came back an hour later he was still there and offered me the blinds again having packed his haul into his bags. He also seemed in the meanwhile to have found one of these plastic tool boxes that joiners use, with tools still in it?! This encounter apart from cheering me up no end, reinforced how much people chuck away without thinking about it. With the exception of the apples and the possible exception of the crème fraiche everything was perfectly serviceable and the bin was a normal landfill bin used by flats. At least this very cheery chap was extending the usage and life of some of this "junk". Neil

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