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Information thief

Kevin Mitnick is considered to be one of the world's most wanted criminals, but his arrest most likely won't show up on a tabloid television show any time soon. It would be far too boring, quite frankly.

That's because Mitnick, 31, is charged with computer fraud — breaking into computer systems around the world and pilfering the world's newest kind of money bag, electronic information.

Mitnick allegedly stole thousands of data files and at least 20,000 credit card numbers as he unlocked sophisticated, supposedly secure computer systems around the globe. Mitnick has been arrested three times before, once for causing \$4 million damage to Digital Equipment Corp. The judge who sentenced him said he was addicted to hacking and sent him to prison and therapy.

As more and more of our lives are written to magnetic disks and electronic memory, thieves such as Mitnick will begin to seem more and more dangerous. Bank robbers might be able to blow a safe and run off with several thousand dollars in cash, but electronic train robbers can shift millions with a few keystrokes. Money has become a series of zeros and ones, a binary stream of information that can't be locked behind an iron door. Encryption might keep thieves from breaking into electronic accounts, but Mitnick has shown that those computer vaults can be dynamited.

Mitnick's arrest and christening as "the world's most wanted computer hacker" marks a new era, when robbers spend hours glued to a monitor and cops such as San Diego Supercomputer Center security specialist Tsutomu Shimomura use cellular phone trackers and laptop computers to make the arrest. The information age has created some new cowboys, and they aren't packing Colt Peacemakers.

Demons possess vending machine

It's been a strange week, as most of my weeks typically are. Too many things have happened for me to describe just one. That's why I've written a new feature, designed to emulate the popular "News of the Weird" package you might have seen before. Since that name was taken already, I'll call my column "News of the Beard."

As you might have noticed on the front of this esteemed publication, one of the drink machines in the Russell House apparently was possessed by a demon or small dragon and decided to erupt into flames. A few people happened upon the machine as it burned and noticed it was spitting Pepsi cans a la "The Exorcist" gone cola wars. The conflagration cleared out the Russell House, which meant we Gamecock staffers got to hang out and gawk at the FIVE fire trucks that came to extinguish the blaze.

Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but couldn't we have saved the city and the university a little cash if someone had just shaken up a couple of the ejected soft drinks and doused the flames? Sure, the floor would have been sticky, but the entire Columbia Fire Department could've stayed home and played with the dalmations, slid down the fire pole or whatever else it is firefighters do when they're not hosing down errant vending machines.

I went to an Army-Navy store to buy some gloves this week. Trips to the Army-Navy store used to be a ritual with my brothers, my dad and me. We'd go in the store, dig through the old clothes and get cool stuff to play soldier in. There was never much color selection, and the Army never actually made different sizes (I had to cinch my camouflage fatigue pants on with a length of canvas webbing.), but Army clothes lasted forever. You could be eaten by a tiger while you were wearing a pair of fatigue pants, and he'd spit out the pants in one piece after he'd digested you.

I had gone to the store in an effort to stop the cold weather we've been having. I figured correctly that if I bought a pair of gloves, the weather would turn unseasonably warm, which it eventually did. That's a good thing, too, because the owner of the store packed the gloves in Eau de Mothball, a slightly unpleasant aroma that reminds me of old people and...well...Army-Navy stores. Mothball stank is impossible to get rid of, too, like those annoying little yippy dogs or certain venereal diseases. Once some-



CHRIS MULDROW
Viewpoints Editor

thing you own smells like mothballs, it will until you or it wears out. We've already established, of course, that you'll be the first to go if that mothball-stanked item is Army surplus.

I noticed while I was in the store that the owner was talking to someone about getting rid of some surplus hand grenades. I quite frankly wasn't aware the military was just kinda getting rid of explosives it had lying around the barracks. I can see it now:

Pvt. Benjamin: Sir, this thermocuclear device is gettin' kinda dusty and rusty. What should we do with it?

Lt. Skippton: Hmmm. We could sell it to a wayward third-world country. We could strap it to the Humvee and be the baddest platoon on base. Or we could take it down to Bob's Surplus and see if he can use it.

Pvt. Benjamin: I'll give him a call. Should I try to get rid of that Apache helicopter with the misfiring cannon while I'm at it?

Lt. Skippton: Sure.

Elections were this week, too. As usual, I dodged people handing out stickers. I figure anyone who has to wait until he gets a sticker to decide how to vote should probably take a serious look at this whole participatory democracy thing. I usually turn away sticker bandits with a few guaranteed lines:

"I'd take one, but I've got bubonic plague."

"I'm voting for Nixon, thanks."

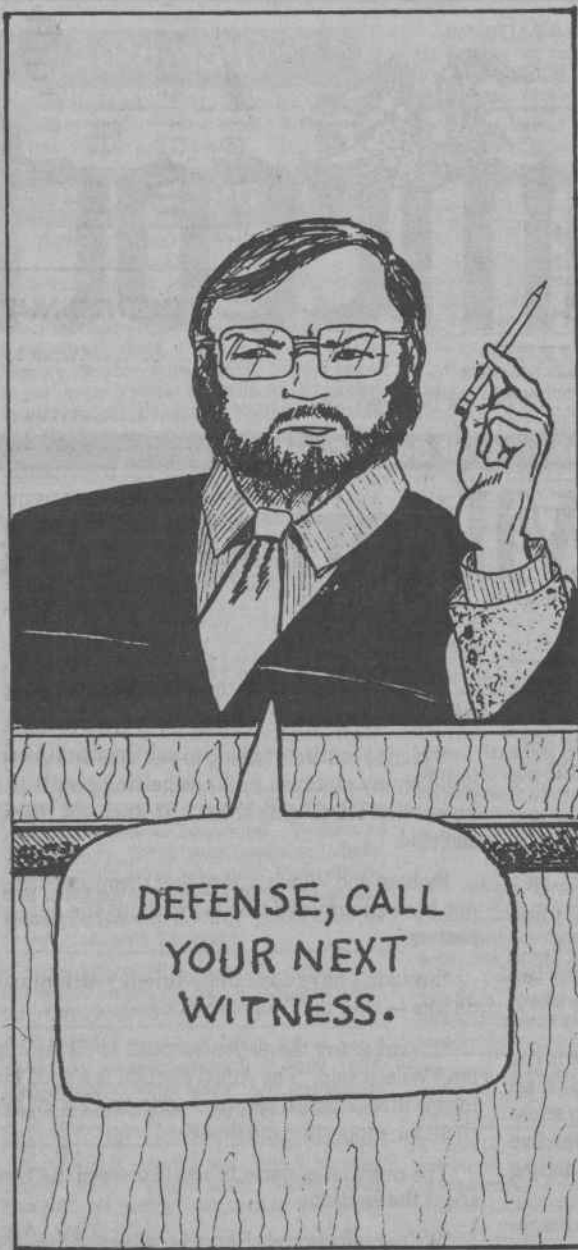
"Look, Mario Cuomo on one of those 'Jurassic Park' dinosaurs! Give him a sticker."

"Can I have all of them, please? I'll send them home to the family...Mom said she needed some tape."

"I'm the father of your opponent, and I hate your guts, slimeball."

If that doesn't work, I either punch them or have my private helicopter airlift me into class.

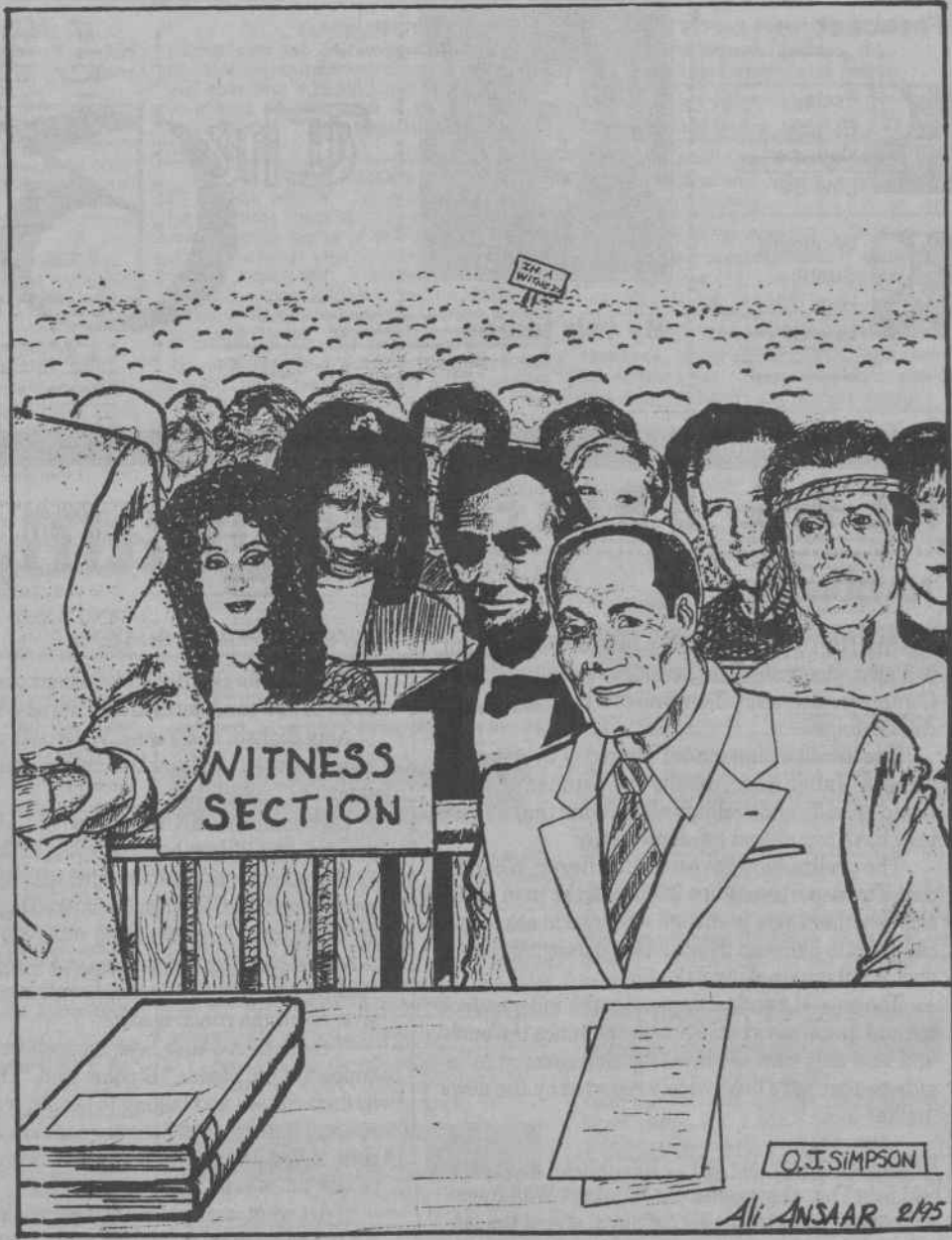
If you happen to run across any "News of the Beard," then drop me a line at The Gamecock, and I'll try to include it in a future article. Or maybe I'll stick it up on my wall at the paper's office. Or maybe I'll just laugh at you ruthlessly and spit Pepsis across the Russell House.



QUOTE UNQUOTE

"The turnout was great. We had an unofficial vote count of 2,600. That's fantastic for a rainy day."

Joey Dituri,
Elections Commissioner



MTV has drifted from moderate entertainment

Last week, I was watching a television show on one of the cable channels dealing with the topic of MTV. They had a group of 40 or so teen-agers who expressed their thoughts and feelings about MTV. The teen-agers in this show's audience expressed many of my personal sentiments about MTV. This prompted me to write about this subject.

Throughout the second half of the 1980s, I watched MTV daily. Back then, MTV played Top 40 videos about 80 percent of the time. Other programming included shows such as "Remote Control" and the series that did profiles on popular recording artists. There was also the very effective "Rock Against Drugs" public service spots that featured superstars such as Bon Jovi and Phil Collins warning America's youth against the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Those were the good old days.

I have seldom watched MTV since coming to USC in 1991. I have very good reasons for my attitude change about MTV. With the dawn of the 1990s came this new MTV. Out with videos, in with more specialized programming. Out with mainstream videos, in with rap and unpopular modern rock videos (e.g., Hole, Dinosaur Jr.). Out with "Rock Against Drugs," in with "Sex in the '90s." Out with moderate views, in with radical leftist views.

I think there were two turning points at which my view of MTV changed. The first occurred in early March 1989. MTV decided to air the controversial Madonna video "Like a Prayer." In this video, Madonna appears to be committing acts of



TOMMY TOUCHBERRY
Columnist

blasphemy against the Christian religion. Pepsi pulled corporate sponsorship of Madonna because of this video, fearing a backlash from Christian America. MTV didn't see Christians as important. MTV had begun its hostile attack against religion, morals and the American people.

The second and final turning point for me was the controversial promotional ads created by MTV in which a black female told the audience (us) that we had better look out because they would soon be the majority in America. She then said, "And how would that make you feel?"

This ad was supposed to be anti-racism, but instead it featured the worst case of hateful racism I have ever encountered. On that October morning in 1991, I officially declared myself anti-MTV. I never thought I would be siding with my parents and my church on this one, but they were right in the first place.

Since that October, I have on occasion ventured into the MTV waters momentarily, only to be offended and angered in most cases. The problem is it doesn't ever play any videos (at least any I've ever heard of). It seems every time I turn on MTV, I see one of four things: "The Real World," President Clinton talking about his underwear and drug-use incident, "Sex in the '90s" or a video by "Poop Doggy Dogg."

Germany needs to leave 'war' behind

Writing Wednesday's article about Yaron Svoray's report "In Hitler's Shadow" was probably the most difficult journalistic challenge I had to face up to present day.

A German journalist writing about an Israeli journalist who investigated the German Neo-Nazi movement? Can this article be objective and adequate?

I had a similar experience two years ago when I had to cover a public demonstration of several hundred people following the rape of a friend of mine.

I wrote the article for the local newspaper, concentrating on what I saw, what I heard. But in the same moment I was involved myself, angry and upset about what had happened to this friend.

Something similar happened to me with the article about Mr. Svoray's lecture. I wrote it in my best conscience and belief and as objectively as I could.

Svoray lectured about his investigations in the German Neo-Nazi movement. One could compare some contradictions between his speech and the text in the book he wrote, or ask whether the thriller-like writing of his book and the lack of investigations in the origins of Neo-Nazism is appropriate to the importance of the topic — but these are technicalities.

The results of his investigations are shocking and alarming. Criticism of this kind is absolutely necessary in order to make the legal and political system in Germany work faster, and as a person who has been born in this country, it is a shame to see these crimes happening.

And it is also legitimate that Svoray tries to provoke with extreme statements in order to create some kind of reaction, as the German government did not address the Neo-Nazi problem decisive enough.

On the other hand, the conclusions he draws from his experiences are understandable, but they are wrong and dangerous because the solutions are too easy.

What the Nazis planned in the so-called End-



WOLFGANG KARG
Columnist

loesung was also an easy solution — that is why any easy solution is suspect to me.

With a journalist friend of mine, I interviewed a group of Neo-Nazis in my university town two years ago. But we did not report only their aggressive and self-complacent statements. We also asked a psychology professor why this kind of hate still exists and how to encounter it. We asked trade-unionists about what they do against Nazis at the workplace. Questions Svoray did not ask.

Talking to Svoray after the lecture, he called for a war against Nazis like the war against drugs. With all respect: There was enough war because of Germany in this century!

The majority of my generation in Germany, born in the '70s, is against violence, against racism, against war.

Since the end of World War II, for the first time in the history of this country, a democratic system has evolved — it was compelled upon Germany from outside after the Third Reich had been destroyed, but this does not mean that the majority does not support it now.

The Germany of 1995 is neither the Weimar Republic nor will it become a Fourth Reich, but it is a constitutional democracy struggling hard and failing still all too often.

If Svoray calls for increased efforts to fight against Nazism, these measures have to be in accordance with the law, otherwise a country becomes a police state.

Svoray's solutions would just combat the symptoms of a complex problem, not its origin, which is based in prejudice, social injustice, identity crisis and the criminal obsession with power of members

of the society. The problem with MTV is that it has become a bastion of far-left liberalism (and no other points of view are considered). In the "Real World," you have one normal country guy from Kentucky along with a bunch of individuals who share radical left wing views. That's not the "real world" that I live in, what about you?

The worst show on MTV, though, is "Sex in the '90s." In this show, MTV portrays chastity, sexual morality and marriage as wrong and obsolete in today's culture. Now, while I concede that attitudes toward sex and sexual morality/responsibility have definitely been in decline during the past three decades, I do not write off America's youth as hopeless. Still, one-third of us are remaining sexually pure until marriage (and plenty more do not share MTV's views on sex). And to portray sexual morality as wrong and shameful is inexcusable on the part of MTV. Furthermore, it certainly doesn't allow for the other point of view. MTV just conveniently ignores that it exists.

Nowadays, I listen to WNOK instead of watching MTV. WNOK just plays the hits I want to hear without any political or social views being aired. When I want to watch videos, I turn on VH-1, which airs current Top 40 videos. Politics and social issues should be left to the editorial pages, news networks and programs and other politically oriented media. Music stations, whether TV or radio, should just play the hits and nothing else. I hope MTV's ratings continue to fall (eventually to a zero share).

of the society.

A new immigration law is necessary for Germany, allowing the easier integration of immigrants and refugees into the society, while also a National Holocaust Memorial has to be realized soon — it is overdue.

Similar to the tendency in the United States, Germany also does not need more influence of the government but more courage and uprightness of the people.

The members of the White Rose resistance group wrote: "Freedom of speech, freedom of conviction, protection of the individual citizen against the arbitrariness of a tyranny, these are the fundamentals of the new Europe." They died for their conviction in 1943.

I know a lot of people who stand up for these ideals in Germany and all over Europe today — peacefully and democratically!

They are not enough, but they exist, too. Simon Wiesenthal wrote in the introduction of "In Hitler's Shadow": "The future will be determined not by how many Nazis there will be — or fascists or extreme nationalists or white supremacists — but how many anti-Nazis, people of goodwill, there will be to confront them."

But like Svoray said, "There is no greater fun for an Israeli than to beat up a Neo-Nazi in Germany" — doesn't he know the results of a spiral of violence?

And I understand the anger and hate — yes, hate — of his generation, that the Holocaust is so near to them. But I know young Jewish people who have a different attitude.

But like Svoray, they have to be vigilant and critical of Germany, helping to find the best peaceful measures against Nazism.

I hope Svoray will continue his important work but also that he will overcome his understandable feelings of anger, meeting anti-Nazi Germans sometime in the future with the word that seems to be the most important in Hebrew: "Shalom."



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The Gamecock is the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina and is published Tuesday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, with the exception of university holidays and exam periods. Opinions expressed in The Gamecock are those of the editors or author and not those of the University of South Carolina.

The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words and must include full name, professional title or year and major if a student. Letters must be personally delivered by the author to The Gamecock newsroom in Russell House room 333. The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.

Letters Policy