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Nazism on the Internet

BY JOHN A. DROBNICKI

Over the past few years, Americans have been inundated with news reports about the information superhighway, also known as the Internet. For those unfamiliar with the concept, think of all the computers in New York State being able to communicate with one another—that would be one network. The Internet is a global network of networks, allowing information to be shared between computers in different parts of the world, through email, bulletin boards, and list services.

VIEWPOINT

The Polish Genealogical Society of America operates a bulletin board service to share genealogical information. But not everyone uses the vast resources of the Internet for good purposes—pornography is one example, and electronic Nazism is another. According to Norman Swartz of Simon Fraser University, "Although Nazis and anti-Semites discovered the power of computers a decade ago, they peddled their hate among themselves in a covert, patchwork network. In the past three years they have switched to the vast public forum of 20 to 40 million people on the global Internet, to publish lies, announce meetings, and recruit members."

It is nothing new for some quacks to deny the reality of the Holocaust. The Nazis themselves began the process of revision, cloaking their hideous actions in euphemisms such as "special treatment" and "final solution." Modern day Holocaust deniers are much more sophisticated, masquerading their hate behind a scholarly veneer and making a mockery of the historical record. Confronting and exposing Holocaust denial is extremely important for American Polonia, for if there was no Holocaust, if the Nazis did not commit genocide, then those millions of Poles that were slaughtered by the Nazis did not die after all. It is the final insult to their memories.

One man is at the forefront of

monitoring and confronting Holocaust denial on the Internet. Ken McVay of Vancouver operates the Fascism and Holocaust Archives, a collection of over 1,000 computerized documents, which he uses to challenge and refute the false history of revisionists on the information superhighway. Using an old personal computer and relying on donations and his income from his job as assistant manager of a gas station, McVay has created an archive that is available for use through the Internet by at least 50 major universities around the world.

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Because of all the time he spends at the keyboard, McVay suffers from both tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome. His Holocaust Research Mailing List, which operates through email, has generated over 1,000 messages in one day. Despite the enormous amount of time and energy that this mission requires, McVay remains adamant in his quest to provide the facets on the Internet. "There's a war going on here because these people want the Holocaust all over again," McVay has said. "If we don't fight this now, we're going to have to deal with them 20 or 30 years down the road." As Professor Swartz has observed, "The only way to counter this racism is to reply immediately, and forcefully, with the truth."