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"The Purist" (from "The Detectives")

by Kim Clark

One of Jim Mintz's first investigative jobs was taping together shredded trash taken from outside the office of Tongsun Park, of Koreagate fame. He was Terry Lenzner's partner at IGI until 1994, when he started his own Manhattan agency. The Mintz Group now has 13 staffers and charges tiered rates averaging about \$125 an hour.

Mintz helped set up Reebok's investigative unit, and does many of the due-diligence investigations for Southcoast Capital, the landing place for several ex-Drexel bigwigs. Among his fans are the Beatles. Mintz found 30-year-old canceled checks that helped the group win a settlement from Capital Records. "Jim is an excellent investigator," says Beatles attorney Len Marks.

Mintz says investigative targets often make one of two key mistakes: They buy cheap shredders that make easily reassembled strips instead of tiny confetti, and they treat departing employees poorly. Ex-employees are often a corporate detective's best source of information. Unhappy ones have blown open many cases.

Mintz intends to keep his business small and narrowly focused on investigations, which he says "are really fun." He has no plans to diversify into newer lines of Info Age detective work.
