



Exploding The Phone

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Bibliographic Cover Sheet

Title **Phone Phreak Phined, Phreed**

Publication *Datamation*

Date 1973-02-00

V/I/P p. 123

Abstract A short article about Captain Crunch's conviction for toll fraud for his call to Sydney, Australia. Contains a brief history of the case.

Keywords phone phreak; John Thomas Draper; San Jose, CA; Captain Crunch; whistle; blue box; FBI

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Phone Phreak Phined, Phreed

A man who built an electronic device with which he could make long-distance phone calls for free has been fined \$1,000 and given a five-year probation for his caper. John Thomas Draper of San Jose, Calif., was also given a stern reprimand by the judge and told that a single repetition of his act would result in his getting the full sentence—five years in the federal pen.

The 29-year-old Draper was nicknamed Captain Crunch, after the breakfast cereal of the same name that at one time came with a toy whistle that produced a pitch that could trigger the phone company's long distance relays. Local phone phreaks had a ball with it for a while. But Draper went further with the concept, developing a so-called blue box that duplicated the phone system's multifrequency signals

and with which he could call for free anywhere in the world. He reportedly also had automated the system, taping the tones of frequently called numbers.

But last May, armed with a search warrant and a complaint by the phone company, the FBI arrested Draper and confiscated "considerable" electronic equipment, including the blue box. He was charged, among other things, with making a toll-free call to Sydney, Australia, which would have cost \$9.90, as well as calls to New York and Oklahoma. He pleaded no contest to the first count, of making that call to Australia, and when the fine and probationary period were imposed, six other counts were dropped.

Datamation, Feb. 1973

p. 123