ABSTRACT

The term white-collar crime has its historical roots in Indiana University and to the late Professor Edwin Sutherland. Sutherland’s introduction of the term has been both a blessing and a curse. It has been a blessing for it called attention to a variety of crimes which were and remain to this day widely neglected. It has been a curse because the term is both a conceptual and definitional quagmire. The result is that although we know quite a bit about the frequency and correlates of conventional “street crimes,” we know virtually nothing about “suite crimes,” or those offenses committed in the context of legitimate occupational activities and markets. The aim of the presentation is to discuss the origins of the term, white-collar crime, situate it in the context of current technological advancements, and examine the conceptual and empirical challenges in developing reliable information sources from which we derive both our common understanding of the problem and our systems of social control.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kip Schlegel is Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the Center for Studies of Law in Action. His intellectual interests lie primarily in the social organization of crime. His research focus is on white-collar crime, particularly crimes that occur in the context of capital markets. He is the author of Just Deserts for Corporate Criminals, and co-editor with David Weisburd of White-Collar Crime Reconsidered. He has served as President of the National White-Collar Crime Research Consortium and President and Executive Director of the International Association for the Study of Organized Crime. He teaches undergraduate courses on Theories of Crime and Deviance and White-Collar Crime, and graduate courses in areas relating to White-Collar Crime, Punishment, and Pedagogy.