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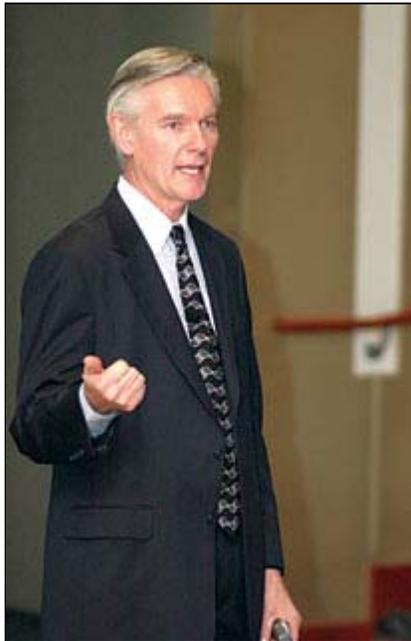
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Jake Mecklenborg

Photo Editor

Gary Zeune, founder of Pros & Cons, a white-collar criminal speakers bureau, lectured yesterday in Walter Hall. Part of the College of Business' ethics lecture series, Zeune stated that the average corporate criminal steals \$500,000.

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OU alumnus examines corporate crime, criminals

*by Ashley Ferguson
For The Post
ashley.ferguson@ohiou.edu*

Drugs, alcohol, gambling, extramarital affairs and plain old greed -all can lead to white-collar crimes, said a speaker in Walter Hall last night.

In front of an audience of about 60 Ohio University business students and faculty members, Gary Zeune wrapped up the College of Business' ethics lecture series.

Zeune, the founder of Pros & Cons, a white-collar criminal speakers bureau, began his speech by asking the audience, "How many of you consider yourselves to be ethical people?" A number of raised hands soon descended as he continued with, "How many of you have ever downloaded copyrighted material from the Internet, or sped on the highway?"

Zeune said many corporate criminals rationalize their behavior just as people rationalize more socially acceptable crimes.

He went on to draw from specific cases such as the 1980s incident with ZZZZ Best Carpet Cleaning Company, in which the founder, Barry Minkow, and the CFO, Mark Morze, stole more than \$100 million.

He also dissected the case at AAA's Detroit branch, in which the executive director stole over \$700,000 for home improvement by modifying paperwork.

The average corporate criminal steals about \$500,000, Zeune said. In small companies, corporate theft often amounts to about \$20 a day per employee, and in large companies, \$9 a day, he said.

"Listen to the grapevine," Zeune said to the audience, "Most of these things are uncovered by accident."

Although Zeune is not an ex-convict, the Pros & Cons speaker's bureau is comprised of several ex-cons who have served prison time for fraud. Speakers are connected with groups who are seeking to learn more about "book-cooking" and theft. According to the Web site www.theprosandthecons.com, more than 20,000 professionals have attended the organization's classes since 1975. Clients include CPA and bar associations and the FBI.

Zeune said he founded the company because everyone he talked to about fraud was on the outside looking in. He decided to ask the criminals themselves.

"If you want to build a better hen house, ask the fox," he said.

Kat Riegel, an OU senior majoring in accounting, said, "I thought it was very good; persuasive. It shows how much it affects people's lives and how it will affect me in the future and what decisions I'll make."

Zeune, an OU alumnus, was invited by the College of Business to be the final speaker in a series about Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility that started September 26.

Jack Barr, the director of external relations for the College of Business, said Zeune spoke for free.