Simpson4REVIEW

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SPEAKERS

Sally Simpson, Jenn Tostlebe, Jose Sanchez

Jenn Tostlebe 00:14

Hi everyone. Welcome back to The Criminology Academy where we are criminally academic. My name is Jenn Tostlebe

Jose Sanchez 00:20

and my name is Jose Sanchez.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:23

And today we have Professor Sally Simpson on the podcast to talk with us about her storied and decorated career as a criminologist.

Jose Sanchez 00:32

Sally S. Simpson is a Distinguished University Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Director of the Center for the Study of Business Ethics, Regulation, & Crime (C-BERC) at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research interests include corporate crime, criminological theory, and the intersection between gender, race, class, and crime. Sally won the 2018 Edwin H. Sutherland Award from the American Society of Criminology. She is a Fellow of the American Society of Criminology and, in 2008, was named Distinguished Scholar by the Division on Women and Crime, American Society of Criminology. Sally served as the 2019/2020 President of the American Society of Criminology. Thank you so much for joining us today, Sally, we really appreciate it.

Sally Simpson 01:19

Thank you very much for having me. I look forward to speaking with you.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:23

So today's episode has three different parts. We're going to first start by talking with Sally about her career and career development over time, then we're going to move into a discussion on her research focusing on white collar and corporate crime as well as gender and crime. And then last but not least, we'll talk about some of Sally's views and thoughts on the field of criminology. Jose, I'll let you get us started.

Jose Sanchez 01:49

Great. Okay. So Sally, we found out through several sources. So you are originally from Oregon, you did your undergrad at Oregon State where you earned your Bachelor's in sociology. From there, you went to Washington State University, as far as I know is because he recognized Jim Short's name at Wazoo, and you got a master's in sociology. And finally, you completed your PhD at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Can you tell us why you decided to earn your degrees in sociology, and then a little more specifically, what kind of pushed you into criminology.

Sally Simpson 02:27

I think from even my high school years, I was very interested in broad social issues, and in particular social problems, and how we could understand - best understand those kinds of issues that were confronting our society. I was in high school in the 1970s. So there were a lot of activities around civil rights, around women's rights, around the war in Vietnam. So a lot of things were happening at the time I was in high school. And I decided when I went to college, that I would, in fact, major in sociology, because that seemed to be the field that was closest to my general interests.

Sally Simpson 03:09

Choosing to go to Oregon State is kind of ironic, because as you two probably know, it's the University of Oregon that has more of the developed doctoral program in in sociology. So I may have been one of three or four students who actually declared a major in sociology going in as a freshman to Oregon State. But I was very pleased with the education that I received there. I worked with some people who were very good theoreticians, as well as a couple of people who focused on juvenile delinquency and corrections. So those were the classes that really struck me while I was at Oregon State. And after I graduated, I did look for work. But I realized that a lot of the jobs, this will be familiar to many students, a lot of the jobs required that you needed a master's degree or three years of work experience. And so that was that experience led me to apply to graduate school. And because Washington State did have Jim Short, who was a renowned criminologist and someone whose name I recognized - I applied only to Washington State University, and was lucky enough to get in. And while I was there, I discovered another criminologist whose name was Mark White, who studied more of the corrections and institutions. And then also, while I was there, there was a visiting professor whose name was Jerry Garrett, who was just one of these most dynamic, really interesting people who taught a comparative criminal justice course. And it just was fascinating to me.

Sally Simpson 04:51

So within sociology, the interests developed more in the area of crime and deviance, of course, which is what a lot of this was called back in the 60s and 70s - the sociology of deviance. So, it developed fairly early and it continued through my graduate career. I left Washington State, I did get a job working in the early and it continued through my graduate career. I left Washington State. I did get a job working in the Oregon State mental facility in Pendleton, Oregon. It was a state hospital, I worked with emotionally disturbed adolescents. I'd also had an internship while I was an undergraduate at Oregon State University where I worked in juvenile intake within Pendleton. Those two experiences kind of led me to realize that that's really tough work. That's hard work. That's emotionally traumatic work. And I found that I probably wasn't cut out for that kind of, of work experience, which led me to take advantage of an opportunity that came up from Jerry Garrett, who was putting together programs for people to teach in Europe with American military personnel who were stationed in bases all over Europe. And so I had this opportunity to teach in Spain, at Tora Han Dardo. And that experience made me realize that I enjoyed teaching, I enjoyed teaching college students. And I didn't have all the answers that I needed in order to be an effective teacher. So that led me back to graduate school at University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Jose Sanchez 06:25

It's interesting to hear about your experience working with the emotionally disturbed adolescents. So one of my mentors back at Calstate LA, she did her master's in clinical psych. And she did her internship at a juvenile facility in Southern California. And it was sort of there where she realized, like, I want to work with this population, but maybe not in this capacity, because I'm not sure if, if I can handle it. So I think it's probably worthwhile to if you think you want to do that type of work. And internship is probably a good idea, because it definitely is not easy work.

Sally Simpson 07:05

Absolutely. And when I advise our undergraduates at Maryland, that's exactly what I tell them. Get an internship in an area you think you want to work before you actually make that decision, because you ultimately may end up back in graduate school, or in law school or something else, right, that better prepares you for a career, that's going to be a better fit.

Jenn Tostlebe 07:27

Yeah, that's exactly what I did. I thought I wanted to go to law school. And I ended up working at an attorney's office and realize that that's not what I wanted to do. And that's what propelled me into the doctoral program. So yeah, yep. Great idea.

Jenn Tostlebe 07:45

So as you mentioned, you started kind of with an interest in juvenile delinquency based off of one of the classes that you took, and at some point, you pivoted to white collar crime. To both Jose and I, that seems like kind of this drastic change in research interests. And so we're interested in what brought about this change in your focus?

Sally Simpson 08:08

Well, well, remember I said that I was always interested in in broad issues of social problems. And one of the things that fascinated me was stratification and inequality. And when you study crime and deviance, typically what you're doing is focusing your lens on disenfranchised people. And I one reason that I switched to my focus on white collar and corporate crime, more corporate crime than white collar, by the way, but one of the reasons that I switched was that I felt like we needed to adjust our lens upward, to understand crime as it's committed by people who are not marginalized, who are not disenfranchised. And then that coupled with a class that I had at Washington State University was titled, complex organizations. And that class just fascinated me, it was taught by a phenomenologist. And it was very theoretical, very conceptual. But I learned so much about organizations, organizational structure, organizational culture. And those two things together, I think really did it for me, until I was at University of Massachusetts, and I was trying to think about what I was going to write my dissertation on. And Pete Rossi was using a book by Marshall Clinard and Peter Yeager in his one of his methods classes, and it was Corporate Crime. So I had read Sutherland. And then here was a more contemporary version of Sutherlands, work by Clinard and Yeager. And it did exactly where my interests were going at that point, it brought in the corporation, and it brought in the crime. And so when I started working on my dissertation That was it for me. That did it.

Jose Sanchez 10:06

Okay, so interestingly enough, at some point, you end up getting a job at the University of Oregon and their sociology department, even though you didn't go there as an undergrad.

Jenn Tostlebe 10:17

You switched sides. Switched teams.

Sally Simpson 10:20

Oh yes, I did.

Jose Sanchez 10:22

From beaver to duck. But at some point, you stopped being a duck and you became a Terrapin. You went to the University of Maryland. And you've been there for about 22 years now. What drew you to Maryland and What's kept you there?

Sally Simpson 10:38

I have actually been at Maryland since 1989. This is going on 32 years at Maryland. So yeah, okay. *laughter*

Jose Sanchez 10:51

Yeah, my math is not exactly reliable. *laughter*

Sally Simpson 10:55

I wish it were only 22 years. I feel a lot younger. But well, it was somewhat complicated that when I was at the University of Oregon, where I was very happy, and I had great colleagues, Robert O'Brien was there. Mimi Goldman was there Jean Stockard was there. Hattie Bortnick Gibbs, Joan Acker. I mean, it was really a packed department, full of really, really good people. Two of my best friends, Jack and Marilyn Whalen were in that department. So I learned a great deal while I was there, but I had an opportunity for a postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard Business School that was going to be jointly supervised by Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Men and Women of the Corporation famous book by Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Amitai Etzioni, and I thought to myself, this is perfect for someone who's interested in or they wanted to do something on what they called, because it was the business school, organizational deviance, they couldn't call it crime. So it's going to be it's going to be a postdoc on organizational deviance. So when I applied for the postdoc, and I was lucky enough to get it, I always intended to go back to Oregon, but Oregon was in the middle of they were going to switch from a quarter system to--Does this sound familiar--a quarter system to a semester system, because the quarter system was a hideous way to teach. And I really think pedagogically it's a poor way to learn. You just get a little bit of snippet of something and then it's time to end the class. So you can't go in any great depth into material. And so they decided while I was at, at the Harvard Business School on this postdoc that they were going to not switch over. And that just, you know, for me was one of the reasons why I thought it would be attractive to stay at Oregon. And then plus, I'll be frank, the Oregon system really is very poor paying for their faculty. When I went there from Smith College where I was teaching, I took about a $6,000 salary detriment to what I was making before. And so I just decided I would check out the job market. And this position at Maryland came up. And I was hesitant initially because it was an Institute of Criminology. It was not a sociology department. And so it gave me a bit of trepidation. But practically the whole department was filled with people who were sociologists. So I thought, Okay, well, maybe it would be a good match. After all, it turned out that it was a terrific place for me to come and to develop my skills further. So I came to Maryland.

J Jose Sanchez 13:43

And Maryland, I think, is considered one of the best programs that we have right now. It's been one of the top programs for a long time. Now, a lot of the big names are Maryland, yourself included. But there's two or actually three, in particular that we'd like to ask you about, because we've heard some rumors that you might have been good friends with these people. And that's Doug Smith, Ray Paternoster, and Denise Gottfredson, and unfortunately, Doug and Ray have since passed. But can you tell us a little bit more about your friendships with them and your interactions and work with them?

S Sally Simpson 14:23

Well, when I came to Maryland, they were all assistant professors in the department. And Denise was very well known for her program evaluation work and in particular, her work on educational evaluations and intervention programs. So Denise and I, well, we had a good friendship. She actually when I became department chair agreed to be the Director of Graduate Studies. So we worked very closely together for many years and worked very well together. But my interests were more consistent with those of Ray who was a criminological theorist, and then Doug Smith was the editor of Criminology While I was at Harvard, he contacted me and asked me if I would have any interest in writing kind of an overview of feminist criminology, because he was as the editor, he was developing these articles that would talk about substantive areas that were newly newly emerging in the field of criminology. And so he asked me if I would be willing to do that I'd had some interest in this area before. And I said, Sure, I would do that. So through that work with Doug, I got to know him even before I came to Maryland. And then Ray's work because he was interested in capital punishment, and racial disparities and capital punishment fit into my stratification and inequality interests. And so when I came to Maryland, we became really quite good friends. And Doug was one of these people who was known for his stats and methods. He was brilliant,

brilliant mathematician. But he had this way, you know, he went to Indiana, so he was extremely well versed in criminological theory. He was an undergraduate, Charles Tittle. He published an article in ASR when he was an undergraduate,

Jenn Tostlebe 16:22

That blows my mind.

S

Sally Simpson 16:25

And so, when I, we would sit on committees together, and you always knew what was coming. Doug would say something like, Well, you know, I'm not a theorist. And then he would ask the most sophisticated theoretical question. So even though he was known for stats and methods, he was also extremely bright when it came to theory and criminological theory. And being editor of criminology, of course, he read voraciously. As did Ray. But so we shared interests, we had similar I'd say, senses of humor, Ray and I played a lot of tennis together, Doug and I played a lot of golf together. So you know, you develop a friendship that way and a trust. And Ray and I ultimately did a fair amount of publishing together, we worked on a project on on corporate crime research, that I pulled him into the corporate crime research, and We butted heads a fair amount on the work because he was much more micro, and I'm much more macro. But the two of us together I think produced actually what ultimately is my most cited article was with Ray in Law and Society Review. So Ray and I published together, we work together, he was brilliant. They were great with students, you know, it was just a good collaboration, a good environment. And you know, we talk as sociologists about cohort effects, I think who you are in graduate school with affects you for the rest of your career, as well as who you start working with, as you know, other assistant professors, you build a cohort and that influences you as well. So I would say that was a major impact had a major impact on me as a scholar.

Jenn Tostlebe 18:08

I never got to met either of them. And I wish that I had been able to sit down and talk to them because they sound like really cool people.

S

Sally Simpson 18:15

Yeah. It's a shame. It's a huge loss for our field.

J

Jose Sanchez 18:19

Definitely, especially when you consider their impact, like I, you know, I think most or most of the people are like in Jenn and I's sort of position. We know Ray Patternoster through his work, and he's still a very influential scholar. And so I'm part of an NIJ funded evaluation here in Denver, and when we were building our survey we drew a lot from Paternoster and Bushway the desistance article, the identity theory of desistance. In a paper that Jenn and I are working together, Paternoster and Iovanni, the labeling paper is very, we're drawing a lot from that paper. So yeah, it's a real it's a real shame.

S **Sally Simpson** 19:04

Well, and Ray hasn't been gone all about long. But But Doug passed in 2004. So he's been gone a lot, a lot longer.

Jenn Tostlebe 19:14

As we mentioned, in your introduction, you served as the American Society of Criminology President pretty recently from 2019 to 2020. And we haven't talked to anyone who's been president of ASC yet on this podcast. So can you tell us a little bit about your decision to run for the presidency, and then what the experience of being President of a society like ASC is like, including kind of what the role entails?

S **Sally Simpson** 19:44

Well, first of all, I will forever be known as the COVID President.

S **Sally Simpson** 19:48

You know, I was president when COVID hit and that was the time that we had to make the decision whether to hold the conference or not. And we chose what we thought was the safeist for all of our members not not to have the meeting. So why did I choose to run for president? Well, essentially, what happens is that you get nominated for these things. And then you're asked if you're willing to run. And you two probably are too young to know this. But this was my third run at President.

Jenn Tostlebe 19:48

Yeah...

S **Sally Simpson** 20:24

The first time that I lost to David Farrington, and the second time I lost to Bob Bursik. So, I honestly, when I was approached by the committee said, No, this last time, no, I've tried it twice, you don't want me to run that's, you know, find someone else. And the chair of the search committee or the chair of the slate, after about two weeks came back and said, Well, we actually need you to run because no one's really willing to do it. So let's just say we're not all fighting it out to become president of ASC. It is a very important job. But ASC is a small organization, with a dedicated staff who work constantly to make the organization successful. But there is not a lot of support for the President, there's not a lot of support for the executive board. And so this is truly service in a way that takes a lot of your time, a lot of your energy. And if you think about what you need to do, you have to put your committees together, which are all of the standing committees, as well as your program committee, you need to work with your co-program chairs, and I was lucky enough to have Lee Slocum and Carol Gibbs join me they were the co-program chairs for me. It takes a long time to get these committees pulled together and to organize the program, a lot of time and energy goes into that. And then once you have all of that done, then you have to start thinking about who you want to what your presidential panels are going to emphasize. And this is the one I would say really one of the positive things about being President is that you get the opportunity through your presidential panels, and through your Justice Award recipients to put a little imprint on the meetings and some of the discourse that goes on at the meetings. And so that's, I think, a nice benefit, you learn a lot more about what people are doing in the organization. So it broadens your horizons, you work more closely with a lot of the divisions. You know, I'm a member of the women in crime division. And I've been a member of the white collar and corporate crime division. But you know, there are a lot of other divisions there. And you learn a lot more about that. You learn how people get things done and how some people don't get things. You know, it's the classic department chair situation, you learn more about your colleagues than you probably would like to know, it's the same thing about ASC. You know, you learn a lot about people that sometimes you'd rather not know. But that's kind of the job. And you know how you can put an imprint on it, how you can bring people together to develop interesting panels. And so that's what it's all about.

Jenn Tostlebe 20:24

No I didn't know that.

J Jose Sanchez 20:25

No.

Jenn Tostlebe 23:30

Yeah, it sounds like a lot of work. But it is nice that there is at least a benefit to kind of, you know, putting your own imprint on things in the field. Yeah.

S Sally Simpson 23:42

For a short time.

Jenn Tostlebe 23:43

Right. For a short time. Yeah.

S Sally Simpson 23:44

And in my particular case, for no time. Although I will say Dan Nagin has been really great about opening up his meetings to people who were award recipients last year who didn't get their awards. So they're going to get them at ASC. This time, you'll have the 2020 and 2021 awards. He let me actually add a couple of presidential panels that are from my years. So

Jenn Tostlebe 24:11

That's cool. All right. We also know, So not only were you known as the COVID president for ASC, but you're also currently the interim department chair at Maryland. And both of these things are obviously taking part during the COVID pandemic. And so can you talk a little bit about some of the challenges that you've had to deal with as an administrator in trying to deal with these more unprecedented circumstances in times?

Sally Simpson 24:40

Well, I have to say that I think the University of Maryland has their act together. I know many institutions did not, for instance, implement mandatory vaccine mandates. Maryland did in April of last year. I believe it was April. We knew that they were going to have a vaccine mandate and We have something like 98.1% vaccinated on campus. So that's a huge thing. Now, I will say that when I took over as interim chair, this is my third time in the chair position. So I kind of knew what to expect. Although I have to say, I didn't realize how much COVID and the changing environment, the changing policies, etc, would impact your kind of day to day, there are meetings that you have to attend on campus where you get new information. I've described it to people as a fire hose of information, particularly as we were moving up into starting the semester. So these are unprecedented times. I would say, in my department, I have not had one student complaint come to me since the semester started about COVID, or COVID protocols, or anything like that. I have had not one complaint from faculty or graduate students. They are happy to be back. They were feeling a sense of isolation and alienation not being able to attend class and to even just informally talk about things. So I would say that I'm lucky in my department, and the way I think campus has handled the situation, that it could be a lot worse.

Jenn Tostlebe 26:31

Yeah, I understand the feelings of isolation, because I was definitely going through that. So it is nice to be back on campus. It's great that Maryland took steps well in advance so people knew what to expect. Yeah, we talked to a few grad students in Texas, and the same cannot be said for how their universities are operating. I don't think.

Sally Simpson 26:54

There's so much uncertainty already, at least let people know what's expected of you. And that provides some predictability and stability. And that has made I think, a huge difference.

Jenn Tostlebe 27:10

Well, let's move in to then talking about some of your research. The bulk of your time, as we've been talking about has been devoted to white collar, but mostly corporate crime. So we'd like to kind of start our research discussion on that topic. Thinking about your Sutherland address to the American Society of Criminology, it's titled Reimagining Sutherland 80 years after white collar crime. It's published in Criminology, for anyone who wants to go and read it. You talk about kind of this definitional debate that's been happening since Sutherland's work on white collar crime. Can you tell us a little bit about what the crux of this debate is and why you believe that definitions like the definition of white collar crime matter a lot to research?

Sally Simpson 27:57

Well, I have been one of those people since I started studying white collar crime that has been Wait a minute, there's just too much cascading effect of the definitional morass as I've called it. We have white collar crime, organizational crime, corporate crime, occupational crime, occupationally related crime, state corporate crime, I mean, there are so many definitions out there, that when I teach my graduate course in corporate crime, I just hand them a sheet and tell them you don't have to know all of these, but here's like, 10 pages of definitions of the phenomenon. Okay.

Sally Simpson 28:36

So, you know, you could simplify it and say that we have two approaches to definitions. One is an offender based definition. And the other is an offense based definition. Sutherland, of course, emphasized the characteristics of offenders that made up white collar crimes, so people with respectability and high social status in the course of their occupation. So you can see the emphasis is on the characteristics of the person that they are people of they're powerful people, and they are within organizations and occupations. But critics suggested that Sutherlands definition was too broad, that it didn't allow people to look at things like status and class in predicting the phenomenon, that maybe a better approach would be to talk about the characteristics of the offense, as opposed to the characteristics of the offender. And critics of that approach, say, Well, when you do that, you really, you take away the notion of power and the importance of the stratification and utilizing additional resources to do the illegal behavior. But there are people who fall in both of those camps and these definitions that we've talked about the pages and pages and reams of definitions can be fit under, you know, one or the other of those definitions, I think it's important that we center in on a few concrete definitions, because as scientists, we need to be able to conduct studies and replicate using the same definition. And and for those reasons, I think that we have to stop the spread, and narrow it down to some clearly understood definitions of what we mean by the phenomenon. And if you think about traditional crime, or conventional crime, we didn't we're not out there debating what constitutes robbery, you know, the definitions of homicide, robbery, rape we've gone around a bit on as we know, but you know, burglary, all of the traditional kinds of crimes, we don't have these endless debates about it. So I feel fairly strongly about this in case you can't tell. I don't think we've done ourselves any favors.

Jenn Tostlebe 31:02

I mean, I think you have to have some kind of definition in order to figure out how to measure it when you're doing research. And if you don't have a consistent definition, your research, like you said, is just going to be all over the place.

Sally Simpson 31:16

David Friedrichs who is a well known scholar in the field of white collar crime, has made the argument that your definition at least needs to be consistent with what your research problem is. And therefore, if your research problem is I want to study corporate executives, and the way in which they disseminate the order to engage in corporate crime, well, then you've got a corporate crime situation. So at least you you know, based on your research question, what definition is appropriate. I still think that's a little squishy, because it means that people who are doing similar kinds of things are going to call it something else. So is that corporate crime? Or is it environmental crime? Because that's really what I'm interested. Or price fixing? Or, you know, so you still have some of those problems?

Jenn Tostlebe 32:06

Do you think the field is any closer to kind of settling this definitional debate or are people still all over the map?

Sally Simpson 32:14

Still all over the map. And you know, people who are very well regarded like John Braithwaite thinks it's a good idea that we don't have all the don't have definitional clarity. John and I disagree on this, but he's a very important person in the field and does great work. So you know, people will listen to John.

Jose Sanchez 32:32

I always thought that this definitional issue was unique to gang research. *laughter* So coming to a Ph. D. program has really opened my eyes at no word, the whole field is kind of littered with definitional issues. It seems every time we talk to somebody like Yeah, well, we haven't quite settled on a consensus definition of our issue that we're studying. But yeah, these definitions of it can definitely cause some challenges, like, you know, words like a gang research, people have looked at the overlap between like the three most popular ways to sort of get at who's a gang member, and there's really only about a nine to 10% overlap. So depending on how you define a gang member, you're capturing different populations.

Sally Simpson 33:18

Well, one of my graduate students, one of my former graduate students, Miranda Galvin, her dissertation was on, does it matter what definition of white collar crime you use if you're looking at things like how white collar offenders are processed in the criminal justice system? And you know, the issues of disparity and processing? A lot of the arguments are that white collar offenders are treated more leniently than conventional offenders in the criminal justice system. And what she finds is, in fact, indeed, it does matter. If you use one definition, you see lenient treatment, if you use another definition, they're treated more harshly. And conversely, if you use another definition, they look lthere's no impact at all of disparity. So this is another example where definitions matter.

Jose Sanchez 34:08

Alright, so a few weeks ago, well, it'll be it'll have been a few weeks when this gets released. We spoke with the current president of or co chair of the ASC division of white collar and corporate crime, Wim Huisman and Wim, if you're listening, I'm trying. I hope I didn't butcher his name. And so we asked him a question and we'd like to ask you have a similar question of how the more traditional theories of crime fit within white collar and corporate crime, do they fit well? Or is it really more of a here's my recipe let me throw white collar into it and stir it up a little bit?

Sally Simpson 34:46

Well, I have been known to say white collar crime is you know, theory you add white collar crime and stir because it essentially has been used as a way to show the deficiencies of traditional criminological theory, why this theory does not apply to white collar crime. And I think we have, often depending, again, this goes back to what you define as white collar crime. But I would say that in many instances, you have to go through a lot of conceptual acrobatics. To make the theory fit. For someone like me who studies corporate crime, you have to take into consideration the individual, the organizational context in the organization, and then what's happening in the organization's context. So you've got these three different layers where you have to make sense of it. Now, you know, neighborhood research does similar kinds of things individual situated and families situated in neighborhoods. But I can't really say that social disorganization is a good explanation for white collar crime, or corporate crime. So I do think that some of the criminological theories are better fits than others. I think rational choice theory is a better fit, differential association is a better fit than low self control, let's say, another purportedly general theory. I do think that some of the newer perspectives - Wim, for instance, has been working on developing life course criminology and applying it to corporate crime or white collar crime. He has some doctoral students, who's been doing work in this area, and I have been working with some of my students trying to determine what would a life course approach to corporate crime look like? How would we create that theoretically? What conceptually, is the marriage effect? For instance, how can we make sense of that desistance effect? Of course, we who studied gender and crime know that it primarily works for men, not for women, that partners actually can have a criminogenic influence on females. But in any case, what is the parallel at the organizational level for some of these key concepts? What are turning points? What are transitions?

Jenn Tostlebe 37:07

Yeah, I love your definition of add white collar crime and stir. I think Wim said that on the podcast that we did with him too, that that was like your terminology. And I was just like, Yeah, okay, I can see that.

S Sally Simpson 37:20

Yeah, I mean, and again, it's a valuable exercise to say, how does this theory, this purportedly general theory, explain these kinds of offenses because people tended not to think about those kinds of offenses. So it's a useful exercise. I think, unfortunately, a lot of people kind of that was their approach to white collar crime. Let's pick a theory and see how it explains white collar crime. Let's pick a theory and see how explains white collar crime. That to me is not developing the field.

Jenn Tostlebe 37:52

Okay, so going back kind of to your Sutherland address. So one of the main things you talked about is this definitional issue. Another one was the topic around data limitations when it comes to white collar and corporate crime. And so on this subject, a lot of the data appears to come from official statistics that's used in research. And those are pretty heavily critiqued because of missing data and other things. But I think primarily missing data is what you focus on in Sutherland address. Can you tell us and our listeners a little bit more about this limitation? And maybe kind of how the systematic counts and measures of business crimes don't exist in official data? And why it's important to address this?

S Sally Simpson 38:39

Mm hmm. You see, we only have how many? How many minutes?

Jenn Tostlebe 38:46

In brief in brief!

S Sally Simpson 38:47

Well, in brief, Sutherland was the first one to point this out that if you use Uniform Crime Report or criminal justice data to try to capture the phenomenon of corporate crime, then you're not going to capture much of it, because the majority of corporate crime is pursued through other legal mechanisms through regulatory law or through civil law. And that was true in Sutherland's day, and it's true today. You're going to find very few corporate crime cases that involve corporate executives that involve corporations in the criminal justice system. That's a huge deficiency of the systematic ability to study the corporate crime problem. And not only that, it tends to give a particular image of what the crime problem is. If you're looking at official data, then you're going to see the characteristics of people who've gotten caught up in the criminal justice system as a problem of predominantly impoverished marginalized people. And you're going to assume that That's who commits the crime. And so it produces, it reinforces stereotypes about who the criminal is, it reinforces strategies for Crime Prevention and Intervention, you know, that image has all kinds of consequences for the way we think about crime and the way we respond to crime.

S Sally Simpson 40:20

And so my argument is that we need to create a more systematic integration of data, Peter Yeager and I wrote about this, we got a grant from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. We need actually to integrate these different sources of official data, these regulatory data with the civil data, and the criminal justice data to have a more comprehensive view of the prevalence and incidence of what we know is offending out there. But then, we still don't know about the hidden figure of crime. Right? So even if we have these data sources, we know how difficult it would be to come up with alternative ways to study corporate crime, you know, what are we going to do surveys of crime victims who don't even know they've been victimized, often from corporate crime? You know, how many of, I always say this in class, how many of you weigh your cereal box to make sure that you actually got your 16 ounces? How many of you know that you paid too much for your Levi jeans, because Levi was price fixing? You know, you just don't know that you don't know, you've been victimized. Or if you find out you've been victimized, you know, you develop lung cancer 20 years after your exposure to hazardous substances at work. So, you know, the victims don't know. And then what about self report surveys? You know, that's our our other alternative to official data. Okay, yeah, we're gonna have corporations self report their offending?

Jenn Tostlebe 41:52

Yeah, that's probably difficult, if not impossible to get them to do. So.

S Sally Simpson 41:56

Yeah. Yeah. So those are some of the problems with the lack of having systematic data, the lack of integrating the sources of official data that we do have, and then even if we have that, what's missing? And how do we how do we capture that which we don't know? What's the epistemic correlation between what we know? And what we don't know? Well, we don't know. Because we can't come up with those alternative measures. Yeah.

Jenn Tostlebe 42:25

Complicated subject.

Sally Simpson 42:27

It is. Which makes it fascinating.

Jose Sanchez 42:31

Yeah. Okay, so we've focused up until now on your work on white collar and corporate crime. But you've also done work in feminist criminology. Can you provide us with like a brief one to two sentence description as to what is Feminist Criminology?

Sally Simpson 42:48

Oh, that's almost as hard as talking about data limitations, and white collar crime. I would say perhaps, feminist criminology is inclusive of gender, sex and sexuality. And it contributes to better understand patterns and trends in offending, victimization, and responses to offenders and victims, including criminal justice and non criminal justice, reactions responses, and that's kind of a simple way to characterize it, but it's, it's bringing women, bringing sexuality, bringing intersections into the study of crime and justice.

Jose Sanchez 43:34

Okay, and you were part of this project called the women's experiences with violence, alongside Candace Kruttschnitt, Julie Horney, and Rosemary Gartner. Can you tell us how this project came to be and what the purpose of the project was?

Sally Simpson 43:51

Well, it was all Julie's idea. She had conducted an interesting study in Nebraska, using male inmates. And so she was part of a National Science Foundation funded initiative called N cover, national consortium Violence Research. And it was headed by Al Blumstein and Julie was part of the group. And she decided that it would be really important because we once again always seem to look at males, maybe it would be useful to use a similar kind of approach with females. And in particular, we wanted to focus on women's experience with violence because there was so little known about female offenders who were violent offenders. We knew a lot more about female victimization, but we also didn't know much about females avoidance of violence. So we created the web study. We used a life event calendar, which allowed us to track women's month to month changing experiences in the three years up to their current incarceration. The study also had narratives very in depth discussions with women, in their own words, talking about, for instance, their relationships with different partners and their actual experiences of these violent incidents and what they were about and how they occurred. We also had a static part of the life event calendar that asked them about their childhood and youth experiences in their family of orientation and things like their economic situation and educational experiences. So it was a very rich instrument, and we conducted it in three cities, Baltimore, Toronto, and Minneapolis. So we ended up with interviews of over 800 women. And so it's been used to study a lot of different things. Julie was very interested in routine activities and situational factors that are associated with crime and victimization. I was interested in strain and stress and the impact that that might have on violence and victimization. We had a lot of doctoral students, you mentioned Lee Slocum, Lee worked on this project. And she's kind of turned into the coordinator of the data from all of the studies that were put together. So a lot of people have used these data, including our graduate students from all the different sites, but it was really an interesting project to work on.

Jenn Tostlebe 46:41

Did you complete interviews yourself on that project?

Sally Simpson 46:45

I did pilots, I went with the students and over into the Baltimore City detention center where we conducted the interviews. And so we were trying the instrument out and I attended all of those sessions - sat in on them to see how things were working.

Jenn Tostlebe 47:01

I bet some of the stories that these women told you were A interesting but also difficult to listen to and hear.

Sally Simpson 47:09

Yes. Very hard to listen to, in some cases, a lot of violent experiences. A lot of loss. And that's what we found with a lot of the incarcerated women is that their lives are characterized by a lot of loss, a lot of pain and loss.

Jenn Tostlebe 47:16

And there are multiple articles out that use that data. So for anyone who's interested in it, I know, Sally, you're an author on a lot of them. I don't know about all of them. But...

Sally Simpson 47:39

No, definitely not a lot of them, I probably have been less productive than Candace or Rosemary. But well, you all know, Julie Horney passed away a while ago, so Julie hasn't done much with the data.

Jenn Tostlebe 47:55

All right. So for this last question on kind of your research, we want to combine these two interests together, so combining corporate crime with sex and gender. And in our episode with Wim, we didn't talk about one specific kind of important discussion, and he suggested that we ask you because you would know better anyway. And so can you tell us a little bit about the role of sex and gender in white collar and corporate crime?

S Sally Simpson 48:23

Well, I can tell you, there are some scholars Darrell Steffensmeier, who has done some work in this area. And Darrell has approached it in kind of the same way he's approached some of his other research, looking at focal concerns and looking at gender norms and socialization, the classic work that he did on trying to remote with fans that Darrell did His work on, I'm pretty sure it was the fence where the interviews suggest they were all males. And they he asked them, Why are there no females in the network, and it's, you know, based on, we don't trust them, they they're not going to help us out with what we need, or they're unreliable and all of these kinds of things. And so Darrell, is kind of taken that work that he's done with Jen Schwartz and Michael Roque and some other folks and kind of applied those conceptualizations to corporate offending, and fraud.

S Sally Simpson 49:16

Now, the work that I have done has looked more at whether the characteristics of the board of directors, which is a form of governance over corporations, whether having more women and having more people of color on those boards actually is a more is more of a deterrent function on offending, does it prevent companies from bending? And that ties into a literature in business and management where they look at Well, if you have women on the board, what does that bring? Does it in fact, lower the risks because women are more law abiding, they like to take risks less than men do. And it's a similar argument not just about the board of the directors but about the top management team. So when you talk about the CEO and the CFO and the Chief Financial Officer, Chief, you know, all of the C-suite people, does it matter if they have more women on? Again, risk adversity, power, power over tone power over the culture? Those are the kinds of questions that people are looking at right now. And does it matter if the industry in which the company is working is predominantly male, or predominantly female? So the characteristics of that industry, does that affect how much crime occurs within that industry? So this is the kind of thing I'm working on now I have a doctoral student who's looking at the top management team and women's power on the top management team to see if that affects their offending. When women get hired, do women get brought in after the companies make these mistakes? So is it a a way to salvage the reputation of the company? Is that what and then once they're brought in, they don't have much power, but it you know, it's kind of if we were looking at environmental probably call it a greenwashing effect, you know, trying to impression management, right. So we do find that there is a relationship to change and bringing in women after these events have happened, we also have found that one woman really doesn't matter. But having two or more, does seem to have more of an impact, at least at the on the board of directors on on the offending of companies. So this is what's going on in the field. It's pretty exciting. It's merging my interest in in gender and corporate crime.

Jenn Tostlebe 51:44

It sounds really interesting. And I'm interested to see what some of these results are that are coming out of the research your doctoral student are doing now. So I will be looking for it when it comes out.

S Sally Simpson 51:55

Okay.

Jose Sanchez 51:56

Yeah. Okay, so we should start moving into sort of our last section of this interview. And so we're gonna start asking to reflect a little bit upon your career. What would you consider to be your greatest career success?

Sally Simpson 52:13

Other than my doctoral students?

Jenn Tostlebe 52:15

That can be your answer, if you want?

Sally Simpson 52:18

Well, I do I do consider my students to be maybe the most important metric of any kind of career success that I've had. Although I would say that the Sutherland award and being named the dup at the University of Maryland were very important to me, because they were so unexpected. I never expected either one of them to happen. And so when they did, it was just a shock.

Jenn Tostlebe 52:45

Okay. And then, in your opinion, what have been some of the, like the key developments or shifts within the discipline of criminology over the last couple of decades?

Sally Simpson 52:57

Well, I think probably, life course criminology emerging in the in the 1990s and 2000s really has shaped the field to within individual change, and the whole idea of initiation, persistence, and desistance, you know, crime over the life course, that clearly had an impact on our field. I think imprisonment, mass incarceration, focus on successful reentry, and concerns about the disparities in the justice system, and the ways in which those manifest and contribute to things like a criminal record, which enhances your likelihood of being punished severely, you know, it's one of these chicken and egg problems. So I think all of those things in the last couple of decades have been really important developments.

Sally Simpson 53:45

I would like to see more attention to non traditional kinds of crime, because I think that we are moving in the direction of more digital crime, white collar and corporate crime, transnational crime, these kinds of issues, instead of just the traditional focus on the index offenses, even though you know, our index crimes, especially our violent crimes seem to be increasing right now. I think focusing on AI, and the use of AI in our criminal justice system, whether it's risk assessment instruments, whether it has to do with surveillance, I think we need to pay a lot more attention to that. I would also say that we need to do a deeper dive into the impact of racism, coupled with class, gender, and other marginalizations in terms of our carceral systems of control. I think we're doing a pretty good job doing that though. I think there's a lot of self reflection now, especially since George Floyd incidents and other incidents that are moving us in those directions. And then I would like to, because I'm a corporate crime scholar, talk about the other systems of control that intersect with our carceral systems. You know, we tend in criminology not to pay much attention to civil justice, we don't pay a lot of attention to regulation and regulatory justice. But I think those are systems of control, and we need to better understand how they fit together.

Jose Sanchez 55:15

Alright, that perfectly makes sense. Yeah, that does look good direction for us to head into. So our last question is, what advice would you give to a newly hired assistant professor Sally Simpson?

Sally Simpson 55:30

I think the advice that I would give is to stay committed to producing quality cutting edge research because that's where it's going to make a difference. Just one more publication is not going to make a difference. Publishing for publication sake is not going to make a difference. You want to expand the envelope of the field and make a quality contribution. So keep your nose down, work hard, don't get easily distracted, and it will work out.

Jose Sanchez 56:13

It's a great piece of advice, we'll be sure to keep that in mind.

Jenn Tostlebe 56:17

Something we hear from our mentors, too. So that's what we're trying to channel going forward.

Sally Simpson 56:23

I know, it's hard. It's very hard for students when they see that, you know, oh, these people are coming out on the market and they have 10 publications. How can I compete with that? It is difficult, but the question is, well, where are the publications? What have they added to the literature? And do people even know who that person is? If they're one person among 15 on an article? it would be more impressive if they had one ASR paper, if they had one Social Problems paper, if they had one Criminology paper, and, boy, if it were a sole authored publication, that's really impressive. And I'll tell you, I think there are a lot of places that look for those kinds of people and think how they're going to contribute to the department and the philosophy that they're going to bring as an assistant professor. That matters a lot.

Jose Sanchez 57:18

Well, that's all we have for you today. Are there any last thoughts, any parting words that you'd like to leave us with? Before we we close out?

Sally Simpson 57:27

Well, you ask if there's anything I'd like to plug, I am a co editor for Regulation and Governance. And I would like to see more criminology kinds of papers published and regulation and governance. So there's one plug. And then for people who are getting their undergraduate degrees and are thinking about graduate school, I would like to plug the University of Maryland Criminology and Criminal Justice Department for graduate school.

Jose Sanchez 57:52

And where can people find you like, you know, Twitter, ResearchGate, Google Scholar, email, that sort of thing?

Sally Simpson 58:00

Well, they're more likely to find me through email. I mean, I do. I am on Twitter, but I don't really tweet very much, and I don't share things, but the department, criminology and criminal justice, is more out there. But the best way to get in touch with me is just to email me at ssimpson AT umd.edu.

Jose Sanchez 58:20

Perfect. And we'll also have that posted up on our website. And well, thank you very much, Sally. This was a great conversation. And for we could have talked to you for many more hours. But we're sure you're very busy.

Jenn Tostlebe 58:35

Yeah, thank you again.

Sally Simpson 58:36

Yes, it was really fun. It was my pleasure. Thanks for your excellent questions, and giving me the opportunity to share some things that I've done in my life and my career.

Jenn Tostlebe 58:47

It's always fun learning about like the career development of people who we know now as like these excellent scholars. So it's been fun doing these.

S **Sally Simpson** 58:56

Well, and you're in a field... Think of it this way. You're in a field that's pretty small and highly connected and people know one another. That's a nice community to be involved in. So was nice to meet you. And I hope to see you both, if not at ASC this year, ASC next year.

J **Jose Sanchez** 59:13

Yeah. We're planning on being there. So hopefully, we will get to see each other.

J **Jose Sanchez** 59:19

Good. Come up and say hi.

Jenn Tostlebe 59:21

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