Contents

Acknowledgments

Introduction

xv

1

CHAPTER 1 Stealing Education 5
The Big Picture 5
Computer Fraud and Fake Work Scams 8
The Embezzlers 10
Prince George's County, Maryland 10
Newport-Mesa Unified School District, California 12
Putting a Stop to Embezzling in Education 14
Theft of Supplies and Equipment 17 Computer Theft 19
Keeping an Eye on School Property 20
Student-Aid Shenanigans 21

New York University 21

Pell Grant Fraud 23
Dishonest Administrators 23
Monitoring Student Aid 28
Student Loan Defaults 29
Winning the Student Loan Standoff 32
The Impostors 32
Tips for Fighting Back 38
CHAPTER 2 The Medical Maelstrom 41
Medical Scams 42
The Drug Trade 42
Faulty Equipment and Unnecessary Procedures 43
Phantom Patients 44
Fraudulent Lab Tests 46
Exposing Medical Scams 46
The Embezzlers 47
Turning In the Embezzlers 51
Taxicabs and Ambulances: Taking Us for a Ride 52
Taxicabs 52
Ambulance Services 53
Some Extraordinary Cases 55
Miguel Recarey 55
The Bramson Bunch 56
Akiyoshi Yamada 58
The Medical Masquerade 60
Foiling Impersonators 63
Tips for Fighting Back 64

CHAPTER 3 Dishonest Lawyers 66

Abusing the Power of Attorney Cheating the Elderly and Disadvantaged **Stealing Insurance Money** Staged Accidents and Exaggerated Injuries 73 Fraudulent and Unethical Billing Practices 76 Protecting Yourself from Overbilling Lawyers Stealing from Lawyers Fight Back with Humor **Bogus Lawyers** Protecting Yourself from Impostors The Lawyers Fund for Client Protection 93 Tips for Fighting Back 94

CHAPTER 4 Cheating Charities 96

The United Way Scandal Frequency of Charity Fraud 98 **Tax-Exempt Status** A Foundation of Fraud 101 Bingo and Casino Nights 105 Medical Charities 109 Living Off AIDS 110 Phony Police and Fire Department Charities 112 **Charity Fraud International** 114

Tips for Fighting Back: Rules That Apply When Donating to Any Charity 116

Insurance Fraud 125 Getting Rich Quick 126 Hate Crimes and Arson for Insurance Sign Up and Switch 128 Faking Death 129 Recognizing Insurance Fraud 130 Churning 130 Red Flags 131

CHAPTER 5

Educating Yourself Against Churners 132
Automobile Insurance Fraud 133

Staged, Paper, and Caused Accidents 133

Recognizing Auto Insurance Scams 135
Dishonest Insurance Agents 136

Fraud by Insiders 136 Uninsured Drivers 140

Exposing the Insiders 141

First Families of Fraud 142

The Kallao Clan 142

The Ballog Bunch 145

Murder for Insurance 147

Domestic Violence

Cover-Ups 149

Multiple Murder Attempts 151

White-Collar Killers 153

Tips for Fighting Back 155

CHAPTER 6 The Religious Ruse 157

Jim Bakker and Tammy Faye Jimmy Swaggart and Other "Affinity Frauds" 159 Recognizing the Affinity Frauds 161 The Con Artists 162 The Nigerian Scam 164 Protecting the Church's Money Embezzling from the Church Preventing Embezzlement of Church Funds 170 The Impersonation of Clergy 171 The Real Thing 174 Identifying False Clergy Tips for Fighting Back 176

CHAPTER 7 The Banking Mess 178

Financial Disasters and Rogue Traders 178 The Savings and Loan Crisis 178 The Bank of Credit and Commerce International The Collapse of Barings The Daiwa Bank Scandal The Fall of Paul: Corrupt Bankers Protecting Yourself—Where We Went Wrong 184 **Electronic Banking** Preventing Electronic Theft 191 **Automatic Teller Machines** 192 Insulating Yourself from ATM Theft 196 Credit Card Fraud What Banks Can Do 197

What Lawmakers Can Do 199
Protecting Yourself from Credit Card Fraud 200
Embezzlement and the Dishonest Bank Employee 204
The Falsely Accused 204
Spotting and Stopping Embezzlers 206
Tips for Fighting Back 207

Appendix: Chronology 211

Banking 212 Charities 216 Education 222 Insurance 227 Lawyers 232 Medicine 237 Religion 242

Index 245